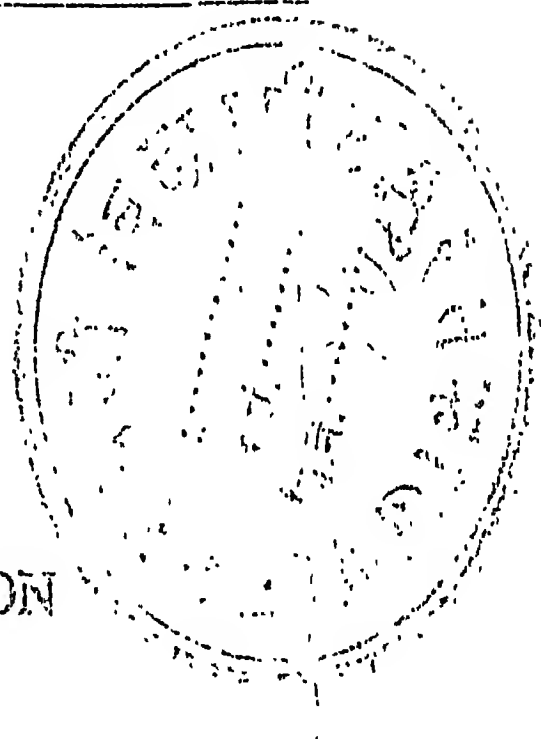


SELECTIONS FROM

TALES OF THE BORDERS

AND OF SCOTLAND

By
JOHN MACKAY WILSON



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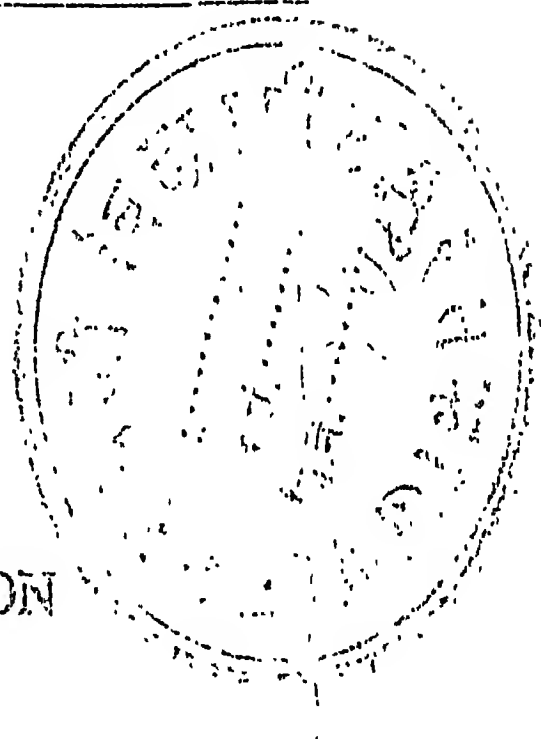
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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE ADOPTED SON. A TALE OF THE TIMES OF THE COVE- NANTERS	3
BILL STANLEY; OR, A SAILOR'S STORY	28
THE COVENANTING FAMILY	56
THE DOMINIE'S CLASS	86
THE FIRST-FOOT	114
GRIZEL COCHRANE: A TALE OF TWEEDMOUTH MOOR	144
THE HENPECKED MAN	150
LEAVES FROM THE DIARY OF AN AGED SPINSTER	167
LOT TERY HALL	178
SAYINGS AND DOINGS OF PETER PATERSON	207
SQUIRE BEN	236
TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS	249
THE VACANT CHAIR	278
WILLIE WASTLE'S ACCOUNT OF HIS WIFE.	293

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE ADOPTED SON.

A TALE OF THE TIMES OF THE COVENANTERS.

OH, for the sword of Gideon, to rid the land of tyrants, to bring down the pride of apostates, and to smite the ungodly with confusion," muttered John Brydone to himself, as he went into the fields in the September of 1645, and beheld that the greater part of a crop of oats, which had been cut down a few days before, was carried off. John was the proprietor of about sixty acres on the south bank of the Ettrick, a little above its junction with the Tweed. At the period we speak of, the talented and ambitious Marquis of Montrose, who had long been an apostate to the cause of the Covenant, and not only an apostate, but its most powerful enemy, having, as he thought, somewhat crushed its adherents in Scotland, in the pride of his heart led his followers towards England, to support the tottering cause of Charles in the south, and was now with his cavalry quartered at Selkirk, while his infantry were encamped at Philiphaugh, on the opposite side of the river.

Every reader has heard of Melrose Abbey—which is still venerated in its decay, majestic in its ruins—and they have read, too, of the abode of the northern wizard, who shed the gloom of his genius over the surrounding scenery. But many have heard of Melrose, of Scott, and of Abbotsford, to whom the existence of Philiphaugh is unknown. It, how-

ever, is one of those places where our forefathers laid the foundation of our freedom with the bones of its enemies, and cemented it with their own blood. If the stranger who visits Melrose and Abbotsford pursue his journey a few miles farther, he may imagine that he is still following the source of the Tweed, until he arrive at Selkirk, when he finds that for some miles he has been upon the banks of the Ettrick, and that the Tweed is lost among the wooded hills to the north. Immediately below Selkirk, and where the forked river forms a sort of island, on the opposite side of the stream, he will see a spacious haugh, surrounded by wooded hills, and forming, if we may so speak, an amphitheatre bounded by the Ettrick, between the Yarrow and the Tweed. Such is Philiphaugh, where the arms of the Covenant triumphed, and where the sword of Montrose was blunted for ever.

Now, the sun had not yet risen, and a thick, dark mist covered the face of the earth, when, as we have said, John Brydone went out into his fields, and found that a quantity of his oats had been carried away. He doubted not but they had been taken for the use of Montrose's cavalry; and it was not for the loss of his substance that he grieved, and that his spirit was wroth, but because it was taken to assist the enemies of his country, and the persecutors of the truth; for than John Brydone, humble as he was, there was not a more dauntless or a more determined supporter of the Covenant in all Scotland. While he yet stood by the side of his field, and, from the thickness of the morning, was unable to discern objects at a few yards distance, a party of horsemen rode up to where he stood. "Countryman," said one who appeared to be their leader, "can you inform us where the army of Montrose is encamped?"

John, taking them to be a party of the Royalists, sullenly replied, "There's mony ane asks the road they ken," and was proceeding into the field.

"Answer me!" demanded the horseman angrily, and raising a pistol in his hand, "Sir David Lesly commands you."

"Sir David Lesly!" cried John, "the champion of the truth!—the defender of the good cause. If ye be Sir David Lesly, as I trow ye be, get yer troops in readiness, and, be the mist vanish on the river, I will deliver the host o' the Philistines into your hand."

"See that ye play not the traitor," said Lesly, "or the nearest tree shall be unto thee as the gallows was to Haman which he prepared for Mordecai."

"Do even so to me, and more also," replied John, "if ye find me false. But think ye that I look as though I bore the mark of the beast upon my forehead?" he continued, taking off his Lowland bonnet and gazing General Lesly full in the face.

"I will trust you," said the General; and, as he spoke, the van of his army appeared in sight.

John having described the situation of the enemy to Sir David, acted as their guide until they came to the Shaw Burn, when the General called a halt. Each man having partaken of a hurried repast by order of Sir David, the word was given along the line that they should return thanks for being conducted to the place where the enemy of the Kirk and his army slept in imaginary security. The preachers at the head of the different divisions of the army gave out a psalm, and the entire host of the Covenanters, uncovering their heads, joined at the same moment in thanksgiving and praise. John Brydone was not a man of tears, but, as he joined in the psalm, they rolled down his cheeks, for his heart felt, while his tongue uttered praise, that a day of deliverance for the people of Scotland was at hand. The psalm being concluded, each preacher offered up a short but earnest prayer; and each man, grasping his weapon, was ready to lay down his life for his religion and his liberty.

John Brydone, with his bonnet in hand, approaching Sir David, said, "Now, sir, I that ken the ground, and the situation o' the enemy, would advise ye, as a man who has seen some service mysel, to halve your men; let the one party proceed by the river to attack them on the one

side, and the other go round the hills to cut off their retreat.”^a

“Ye speak skilfully,” said Sir David, and he gave orders as John Brydone had advised.

The Marquis of Montrose had been disappointed in reinforcements from his sovereign. Of two parties which had been sent to assist him in his raid into England, one had been routed in Yorkshire, and the other defeated on Carlisle sands, and only a few individuals from both parties joined him at Selkirk. A great part of his Highlanders had returned home to enjoy their plunder; but his army was still formidable, and he imagined that he had Scotland at his feet, and that he had nothing to fear from anything the Covenanters could bring against him. He had been writing despatches throughout the night; and he was sitting in the best house in Selkirk, penning a letter to his sovereign, when he was startled by the sounds of cannon and of musketry. He rushed to the street, the inhabitants were hurrying from their houses—many of his cavalry were mingling, half-dressed, with the crowd. “To horse!—to horse!” shouted Montrose. His command was promptly obeyed; and, in a few moments, at the head of his cavalry, he rushed down the street leading to the river towards Philiphaugh. The mist was breaking away, and he beheld his army fleeing in every direction. The Covenanters had burst upon them as a thunderbolt. A thousand of his best troops lay dead upon the field. He endeavoured to rally them, but in vain; and cutting his way through the Covenanters, he fled at his utmost speed, and halted not until he had arrived within a short distance of where the delightful watering town of Innerleithen now stands, when he sought a temporary resting-place in the house of Lord Traquair.

John Brydone, having been furnished with a sword, had

“ But halve your men in equal parts,
Your purpose to fulfil;
Let ae half keep the water side,
The rest gae round the hill.”

Battle of Philiphaugh.—Border Ballad.

not been idle during the engagement; but, as he had fought upon foot, and the greater part of Lesly's army were cavalry, he had not joined in the pursuit; and, when the battle was over he conceived it to be as much his duty to act the part of the Samaritan as it had been to perform that of a soldier. He was busied, therefore, on the field in administering, as he could, to the wounded: and whether they were Cavalier or Covenanter, it was all one to John; for he was not one who could trample on a fallen foe, and in their hour of need he considered all men as brothers. He was passing within about twenty yards of a tent upon the Haugh, which had a superior appearance to the others—it was larger, and the cloth which covered it was of a finer quality; when his attention was arrested by a sound unlike all that belonged to a battle-field—the wailing and the cries of an infant! He looked around, and near him lay the dead body of a lady, and on her breast, locked in her cold arms, a child of a few months old was struggling. He ran towards them—he perceived that the lady was dead—he took the child in his arms—he held it to his bosom—he kissed its cheek. “Puir thing!—puir thing!” said John; “the innocent hae been left to perish among the unrighteous.” He was bearing away the child, patting its cheek, and caressing it as he went, and forgetting the soldier in the nurse, when he said unto himself, “Puir innocent!—an’, belike yer wrang-headed faither is fleeing for his life, an’ thinking about ye an’ yer mother as he flees! Weel, ye may be claimed some day, an’ I maun do a’ in my power to gie an account o’ ye.” So John turned back towards the lifeless body of the child’s mother; and he perceived that she wore a costly ring upon her finger, and bracelets on her arms; she also held a small parcel, resembling a book, in her hands, as though she had fled with it, without being able to conceal it, and almost at the door of her tent she had fallen with her child in her arms, and her treasure in her hand. John stooped upon the ground, and he took the ring from her finger, and the bracelets from her arms; he took also the packet from her hands, and in it

he found other jewels, and a purse of gold pieces. "These may find thee a faither, puir thing," said he; "or if they do not, they may befriend thee when John Brydone cannot."

He carried home the child to his own house, and his wife had at that time an infant daughter at her breast, and she took the foundling from her husband's arms, and became unto it as a mother, nursing it with her own child. But John told not his wife of the purse, nor the ring, nor the rich jewels.

The child had been in their keeping for several weeks, but no one appeared to claim him. "The bairn may hae been baptized," said John; "but it wad be after the fashion o' the sons o' Belial; but he is a brand plucked from the burning—he is my bairn noo, and I shall be unto him as a faither—I'll tak upon me the vows—and, as though he were flesh o' my ain flesh, I will fulfil them." So the child was baptized; and, in consequence of his having been found on Philiphaugh, and of the victory there gained, he was called Philip; and, as John had adopted him as his son, he bore also the name of Brydone. It is unnecessary for us to follow the foundling through his years of boyhood. John had two children—a son named Daniel, and Mary, who was nursed at her mother's breast with the orphan Philip. As the boy grew up, he called his protectors by the name of father and mother; but he knew they were not such, for John had shown him the spot upon the Haugh where he had found him wailing on the bosom of his dead mother. Frequently, too, when he quarrelled with his playfellows, they would call him the "Philiphaugh foundling," and "the cavalier's brat;" and on such occasions Mary was wont to take his part, and, weeping, say "he was her brother." As he grew up, however, it grieved his protector to observe that he manifested but little of the piety, and less of the sedateness, of his own children. "What is born i' the bane isna easily rooted out o' the flesh," said John; and in secret he prayed and wept that his adopted son might be brought to a knowledge of the truth. The days of the Commonwealth had come, and John and his son Daniel re-

joiced in the triumphs of the Parliamentary armies, and the success of its fleets; but while they spoke, Philip would mutter between his teeth, "It is the triumph of murderers!" He believed that but for the ascendancy of the Commonwealth he might have obtained some tidings of his family; and this led him to hate a cause which the activity of his spirit might have tempted him to embrace.

Mary Brydone had always been dear to him; and, as he grew towards manhood, he gazed on her beautiful features with delight; but it was not the calm delight of a brother contemplating the fair face of a sister; for Philip's heart glowed as he gazed, and the blush gathered on his cheek. One summer evening they were returning from the fields together, the sun was sinking in the west, the Etterick murmured along by their side, and the plaintive voice of the wild-dove was heard from the copse-wood which covered the hills.

"Why are you so sad, brother Philip?" said Mary, "would you hide anything from your own sister?"

"Do not call me *brother*, Mary," said he earnestly—"do not call me *brother*!"

"Who would call you brother, Philip, if I did not?" returned she affectionately.

"Let Daniel call me brother," said he eagerly; "but not you—not you!"

She burst into tears. "When did I offend you, Philip?" she added, "that I may not call you brother?"

"Never, Mary!—never!" he exclaimed; "call me Philip—*your* Philip!—anything but brother!" He took her hand within his—he pressed it to his bosom. "Mary," he added, "I have neither father, mother, brother, nor kindred—I am alone in the world—let there be something that I can call *mine*—something that will love me in return! Do you understand me, Mary?"

"You are cruel, Philip," said she, sobbing as she spoke; "you know I love you—I have always loved you!"

"Yes! as you love Daniel—as you love your father; but not as——"

"You love Mr. Duncan," he would have said; but his heart upbraided him for the suspicion, and he was silent. It is here necessary to inform the reader that Mr. Duncan was a preacher of the Covenant, and John Brydone revered him much. He was much older than Mary, but his heart cleaved to her, and he had asked her father's consent to become his son-in-law. John, though a stern man, was not one who would force the inclination of his daughter; but Mr. Duncan was, as he expressed it, "one of the faithful in Israel," and his proposal was pleasing to him. Mary, however, regarded the preacher with awe, but not with affection.

Mary felt that she understood Philip—that she loved him, and not as a brother. She hid her face upon his shoulder, and her hand returned the pressure of his. They entered the house together, and her father perceived that his daughter's face was troubled. The manner of both was changed. He was a shrewd man as well as a stern man, and he also suspected the cause.

"Philip," said he, calmly, "for twenty years hae I protected ye an' watched ower ye wi' a faither's care, an' I fear that, in return for my care, ye hae brought sorrow into the bosom o' my family—an instilled disobedience into the flesh o' my ain flesh. But, though ye hae cleaved—as it maun hae been inherent in your bluid—after the principles o' the sons o' this warld, yet, as I ne'er found ye guilty o' a falsehood, an' as I believe ye incapable o' ane, tell me truly, why is yer countenance, an' that o' Mary, changed—and why are ye baith troubled to look me straight in the face? Answer me—hae ye taught her to forget that she is yer sister?"

"Yes!" answered Philip; "and can it offend the man who saved me, who has watched over me, and sheltered me from infancy till now, that I should wish to be his son in more than in name?"

"It does offend me, Philip," said the Covenanter; "even unto death it offends me! I hae consented that my dochter shall gie her hand to a guid an' a godly man, who will look after her weelfare baith here and hereafter. And ye

kenned this—she kenned it, and she didna refuse; but ye hae come like the son o' darkness, an' sawn tares amang the wheat."

"Father," said Philip, "if you will still allow me to call you by that name—foundling though I am—unknown as I am—in what am I worse than him to whom ye would sacrifice your daughter's happiness?"

"Sacrifice her happiness!" interrupted the old man; "hoo daur ye speak o' happiness, wha kens nae meanin' for the word but the vain pleasures o' this sinfu' warld? Think ye that, as a faither, an' as ane that has my offspring to answer for, that I daur sacrifice the eternal happiness o' my bairn for the gratification o' a temporary feelin' which ye encourage the day and may extinguish the morn. Na, sir; they wha wad ken what true happiness is, maun first learn to crucify human passions. Mary," added he, sternly, turning to his daughter, "repeat the fifth commandment."

She had been weeping before, and she now wept aloud.

"Repeat it," replied her father yet more sternly.

"Honour thy father and thy mother," added she, sobbing as she spoke.

"See, then, bairn," rejoined her father, "that ye remember that commandment on yer heart as weel as on yer tongue. Remember, too, that o' a' the commands, it's the only ane to which a promise is attached; and, noo, mark what I say, an', as ye wadna disobey me, see, at yer peril, that ye ne'er permit this young man to speak to ye again, save only as a brither."

"Sir," said Philip, "we have grown up together like twin tendrils on the same vine, and can ye wonder that our hearts have become entwined round each other, or that they can tear asunder because ye command it? Or could I look on the face of an angel——"

"Out on ye, blasphemer!" interrupted the Covenantanter—"wad ye apply siccan epithets to a bairn o' mine? Once for all, hear me, Philip; there are but twa ways o't, and ye can tak yer choice. It's the first time I hae spoken to ye roughly, but it isna the first time my spirit has mourned

ower ye. I hae tried to lead ye in the right path; ye hae had baith precept and example afore ye; but the leaven o' this warld—the leaven o' the persecutors o' the Kirk and the Covenant—was in yer very bluid; an' I believe, if opportunity had offerd, ye wad hae drawn yer sword in the unholy cause. A' that I could say, and a' that I could do, religion has ne'er had ony place in yer heart; but ye hae yearned aboot yer faither, and ye hae mourned aboot yer mother—an' that was natural aneugh—but, oh! ye hae also desired to cling to the cauld formality o' Episcopacy, as they nae doot did: an' should ye e'er discover that yer parents hae been Papists, I believe that ye wad become ane too! An' often, when the conversation turned upon the apostate Montrose, or the gallant Lesly, I hae seen ye manifest the spirit an' the very look o' a persecutor. Were I to gie up my dochter to such a man, I should be worse than the heathen wha sacrifice their offspring to the abomination o' idols. Noo, Philip, as I hae tauld ye, there are but twa ways o't. Either this very hour gie me yer solemn promise that ye will think o' Mary as to be yer wife nae mair, or, wi' the risin' o' to-morrow's sun, leave this house for ever!"

"Sir," said Philip, bitterly, "your last command I can obey, though it would be with a sad heart—though it would be in despair!—your first I cannot—I will not!"

"You must—you *shall*!" replied the Covenanter.

"Never!" answered Philip.

"Then," replied the old man, "leave the roof that has sheltered ye frae yer cradle!"

"I will!" said Philip, and the tears ran down his cheeks. He walked towards Mary, and, with a faltering voice, said—"Farewell, Mary!—Farewell! I did not expect this; but do not forget me—do not give your hand to another—and we shall meet again!"

"You shall not," interrupted the inexorable old man.

Mary implored her father, for her sake, and for the sake of her departed mother, who had loved Philip as her own son, that he would not drive him from the house, and Daniel, too, entreated; but their supplications were vain.

"Farewell, then," said Philip; "and, though I depart in misery, let it not be with thy curse, but let the blessing of him who has been to me a father until now go with me."

"The blessin' o' Heaven be wi' ye and around ye, Philip!" groaned the Covenanter, struggling to conceal a tear: "but, if ye will follow the dictates o' yer rebellious heart and leave us, tak wi' ye yer property."

"My property!" repeated Philip.

"Yer property," returned the old man. "Twenty years has it lain in that drawer, an' during that time eyes hae not seen it, nor fingers touched it. It will assist ye noo; an', when ye enter the warld, may throw some light upon yer parentage."

He went to a small drawer, and unlocking it, he took out the jewels, the bracelet, the ring, and the purse of gold, and, placing them in Philip's hand, exclaimed, "Fareweel!—fareweel!—but it maun be!" and he turned away his head.

"O Mary!" cried Philip, "keep—keep this in remembrance of me," as he attempted to place the ring in her hand.

"Awa, sir!" exclaimed the old man, vehemently, "wad ye bribe my bairn into disobedience, by the ornaments o' folly an' iniquity! Awa, ye son o' Belial, and provoke me not to wrath!"

Philip groaned, he dashed his hand upon his brow, and rushed from the house. Mary wept long and bitterly, and Daniel walked to and fro across the room, mourning for one whom he loved as a brother. The old man went out into the fields to conceal the agony of his spirit; and, when he had wandered for a while, he communed with himself, saying, "I hae dune foolishly, an' an ungodly action hae I performed this nicht; I hae driven oot a young man upon a wicked warld, wi' a' his sins an' his follies on his head; an', evil come upon him, or he plunge into the paths o' wickedness, his bluid an' his guilt will be laid at my hands! Puir Philip," he added; "after a' he had a kind heart!"

And the stern old man drew the sleeve of his coat across his eyes. In this frame of mind he returned to the house. "Has Philip not come back?" said he, as he entered. His son shook his head sorrowfully, and Mary sobbed more bitterly.

"Rin ye awa down to Melrose, Daniel," said he, "an' I'll awa up to Selkirk, an' inquire for him, an' bring him back. Yer faither has allowed passion to get the better o' him, an' to overcome baith the man an' the Christian."

"Run, Daniel, run!" cried Mary eagerly. And the old man and his son went out in search of him.

Their inquiries were fruitless. Days, weeks, and months rolled on, but nothing more was heard of poor Philip. Mary refused to be comforted; and the exhortations, the kindness, and the tenderness shown towards her by the Rev. Mr. Duncan, if not hateful, were disagreeable. Dark thoughts, too, had taken possession of her father's mind, and he frequently sank into melancholy; for the thought haunted him that his adopted son, on being driven from his house, had laid violent hands upon his own life; and this idea embittered every day of his existence.

More than ten years had passed since Philip had left the house of John Brydone. The Commonwealth was at an end, and the second Charles had been recalled; but exile had not taught him wisdom, nor the fate of his father discretion. He madly attempted to be the lord and ruler of the people's conscience, as well as King of Britain. He was a libertine with some virtues—a bigot without religion. In the pride, or rather folly of his heart, he attempted to force Prelacy upon the people of Scotland; and he let his blood-hounds loose, to hunt the followers of the Covenant from hill to hill, to murder them on their own hearths, and, with the blood of his victims, to blot out the word *conscience* from the vocabulary of Scotchmen. The Covenanters sought their God in the desert and on the mountains which he had reared; they worshipped him in the temples which his own hands had framed; and there the persecutor sought them, the destroyer found them, and the sword of the tyrant was bathed in

the blood of the worshipper! Even the family altar was profaned; and, to raise the voice of prayer and praise in the cottage to the King of kings, was held to be as treason against him who professed to represent him on earth. At this period, too, Graham of Claverhouse—whom some have painted as an angel, but whose actions were worthy of a fiend—at the head of his troopers, who were called by the profane *the ruling elders of the kirk*, was carrying death and cold-blooded cruelty throughout the land.

Now, it was on a winter night in the year 1677, a party of troopers were passing near the house of old John Brydone, and he was known to them not only as being one who was a defender of the Covenant, but also as one who harboured the preachers, and whose house was regarded as a conventicle.

“Let us rouse the old psalm-singing heretic who lives here from his knees,” said one of the troopers.

“Ay, let us stir him up,” said the sergeant, who had the command of the party; “he is an old offender, and I don’t see we can make a better night’s work than drag him along, bag and baggage, to the Captain. I have heard as how it was he that betrayed our commander’s kinsman, the gallant Montrose.”

“Hark!—hark!—softly! softly!” said another, “let us dismount—hear how the nasal drawl of the conventicle moans through the air! My horse pricks his ears at the sound already. We shall catch them in the act.”

Eight of the party dismounted, and, having given their horses in charge of four of their comrades, who remained behind, walked on tiptoe to the door of the cottage. They heard the words given, and sung—

“When cruel men against us rose
To make of us their prey.”

“Why, they are singing treason,” said one of the troopers. “What more do we need?”

The sergeant placed his forefinger on his lips, and for about ten minutes they continued to listen. The song of praise ceased, and a person commenced to read a

chapter. They heard him also expound to his hearers as he read.

"It is enough!" said the sergeant; and, placing their shoulders against the door, it was burst open. "You are our prisoners!" exclaimed the troopers, each man grasping a sword in his right hand, and a pistol in the left.

"It is the will of Heaven!" said the Rev. Mr. Duncan; for it was him who had been reading and expounding the Scriptures; "but, if ye stretch forth your hands against a hair o' our heads, He, without whom a sparrow cannot fall to the ground, shall remember it against ye at the great day o' reckoning, when the trooper shall be stripped of his armour, and his right hand shall be a witness against him!"

The soldiers burst into a laugh of derision. "No more of your homily, revered oracle," said the sergeant; "I have an excellent recipe for short sermons here; utter another word, and you shall have it!" The troopers laughed again, and the sergeant, as he spoke, held his pistol in the face of the preacher.

Besides the clergyman there were in the room old John Brydone, his son Daniel, and Mary.

"Well, old greybeard," said the sergeant, addressing John, "you have been reported as a dangerous and disaffected Presbyterian knave, as we find you to be; you are also accused of being a harbourer and an accomplice of the preachers of sedition; and, lo! we have found also that your house is used as a conventicle. We have caught you in the act, and we shall take every soul of you as evidence against yourselves. So come along, old boy—I should only be doing my duty by blowing your brains against the wall; but that is a ceremony which our commander may wish to see performed in his own presence!"

"Sir," said John, "I neither fear ye nor your armed men. Tak me to the bluidy Claverhouse, if ye will, and at the day o' judgment it shall be said—'*Let the murderers o' John Brydone stand forth!*'"

"Let us despatch them at once," said one of the troopers.

"Nay," said the sergeant; "bind them together, and drive them before us to the Captain: I don't know but he may wish to *do justice* to them with his own hand."

"The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel," groaned Mr. Duncan.

Mary wrung her hands—"Oh, spare my father!" she cried.

"Wheest, Mary!" said the old man; "as soon wad a camel pass through the eye o' a needle, as ye wad find compassion in the hands o' these men!"

"Bind the girl and the preacher together," said the sergeant.

"Nay, by your leave, sergeant," interrupted one of the troopers, "I wouldn't be the man to lift a hand against a pretty girl like that, if you would give me a regiment for it."

"Ay, ay, Macdonald," replied the sergeant, "this comes of your serving under that canting fellow, Lieutenant Mowbray—he has no love for the service; and confound me if I don't believe he is half a Roundhead in his heart. Tie the hands of the girl, I command you."

"I will not!" returned Macdonald; "and hang me if any one else shall!"—And, with his sword in his hand, he placed himself between Mary and his comrades.

"If you do not bind her hands, I shall cause others to bind yours," said the sergeant.

"They may try that who dare!" returned the soldier, who was the most powerful man of the party; "but what I've said I'll stand to."

"You shall answer for this to-morrow," said the sergeant, sullenly, who feared to provoke a quarrel with the trooper.

"I will answer it," replied the other.

John Brydone, his son Daniel, and the Rev. Mr. Duncan were bound together with strong cords, and driven from the house. They were fastened, also, to the horses of the troopers; and, as they were dragged along, the cries and the lamentations of Mary followed them; and the troopers

laughed at her wailing, or answered her cries with mockery, till the sound of her grief became inaudible in the distance, when again they imitated her cries, to harrow up the feelings of her father.

Claverhouse, and a party of his troops, were then in the neighbourhood of Traquair; and before that man, who knew not what mercy was, John Brydone, and his son, and the preacher, were brought. It was on the afternoon of the day following that on which they had been made prisoners, that Claverhouse ordered them to be brought forth. He was sitting with wine before him, in the midst of his officers; and amongst them was Lieutenant Mowbray, whose name was alluded to by the sergeant.

"Well, knaves!" began Claverhouse, "ye have been singing, praying, preaching, and holding conventicles.—Do ye know how Graham of Claverhouse rewards such rebels?"

As the prisoners entered, Lieutenant Mowbray turned away his head, and placed his hand upon his brow.

"Sir," said John, addressing Claverhouse, "I'm neither knave nor rebel—I hae lifted up my voice to the God o' my faithers, according to my conscience; and, unworthy as I am o' the least o' His benefits, for threescore years and ten He has been my shepherd and deliverer, and, if it be good in His sight, He will deliver me now. My trust is in Him, and I fear neither the frown nor the sword o' the persecutor."

"Have done, grey-headed babbler!" cried Claverhouse.

Lieutenant Mowbray, who still sat with his face from the prisoners, raised his handkerchief to his eyes.

"Captain," said Mr. Duncan, "there's a day coming when ye shall stand before the great Judge, as we now stand before you; and when the remembrance o' this day, and the blood o' the righteous which ye hae shed, shall be written with letters o' fire on yer ain conscience, and recorded against ye; and ye shall call upon the rocks and mountains to cover ye——"

"Silence!" exclaimed Claverhouse. "Away with them!"

he added, waving his hand to his troopers—"shoot them before sunrise!"

Shortly after the prisoners had been conveyed from the presence of Claverhouse, Lieutenant Mowbray withdrew; and having sent for the soldier who had interfered on behalf of Mary—"Macdonald," he began, "you were present yesterday when the prisoners, who are to die to-morrow, were taken. Where did you find them?"

"In the old man's house," replied the soldier; and he related all that he had seen, and how he had interfered to save the daughter. The heart of the officer was touched, and he walked across his room, as one whose spirit was troubled. "You did well, Macdonald!" said he at length—"You did well!" He was again silent, and again he added—"And you found the preacher in the old man's house—you found Him there!" There was an anxious wildness in the tone of the lieutenant.

"We found him there," replied the soldier.

The officer was again silent—again he thoughtfully paced across the floor of his apartment. At length, turning to the soldier, he added—"I can trust you, Macdonald. When night has set in, take your horse and ride to the house of the elder prisoner, and tell his daughter—the maiden whom you saved—to have horses in readiness for her father, her brother, and—and her—her *husband*!" said the lieutenant, faltering as he spoke; and when he had pronounced the word *husband* he again paused, as though his heart was full. The soldier was retiring—"Stay," added the officer, "tell her, her father, her brother, and—the preacher shall not die; before daybreak she shall see them again; and give her this ring as a token that ye speak truly."

He took a ring from his finger, and gave it into the hands of the soldier.

It was drawing towards midnight. The troops of Claverhouse were quartered around the country, and his three prisoners, still bound to each other, were confined in a small farm-house, from which the inhabitants had been expelled. They could hear the heavy and measured tread of the

sentinel pacing backward and forward in front of the house; the sound of his footsteps seemed to measure out the moments between them and eternity. After they had sung a psalm and prayed together—"I am auld," said John Brydone; "and I fear not to die, but rather glory to lay down my life for the great cause—but, oh, Daniel! my heart yearns that yer bluid also should be shed—had they only spared ye, to hae been a protector to oor puir Mary!—or had I no driven Philip frae the house——"

"Mention not the name of the cast-away," said the minister.

"Dinna mourn, faither," answered Daniel, "an arm mair powerful than that of man will be her supporter and protector."

"Amen," responded Mr. Duncan. "She has aye been cauld to me, and has turned the ear o' the deaf adder to the voice o' my affection; but even noo, when my thochts should be elsewhere, the thocht o' her burns in my heart like a coal o' my fire."

While they yet spoke, a soldier wrapt up in a cloak approached the sentinel, and said—

"It is a cold night, brother."

"Piercing," replied the other, striking his feet upon the ground.

"You are welcome to a mouthful of my spirit-warmer," added the first, taking a bottle from beneath his cloak.

"Thank ye!" rejoined the sentinel: "but I don't know your voice. You don't belong to our corps, I think."

"No," answered the other; "but it matters not for that—brother soldiers should give and take."

The sentinel took the bottle and raised it to his lips; he drank, and swore the liquor was excellent.

"Drink again," said the other; "you are welcome; it is as good as a double cloak around you." And the sentinel drank again.

"Good night, comrade," said the trooper. "Good night," replied the sentinel; and the stranger passed on.

Within half an hour the same soldier, still muffled up

in his cloak, returned. The sentinel had fallen against the door of the house, and was fast asleep. The stranger proceeded to the window—he raised it—he entered. “Fear nothing,” he whispered to the prisoners, who were bound to staples that had been driven into the opposite wall of the room. He cut the cords with which their hands and their feet were fastened.

“Heaven reward ye for the mercy o’ yer heart, and the courage o’ this deed,” said John.

“Say nothing,” whispered their deliverer, “but follow me.”

Each man crept from the window, and the stranger again closed it behind them. “Follow me and speak not,” whispered he again; and, walking at his utmost speed, he conducted them for several miles across the hills; but still he spoke not. Old John marvelled at the manner of their deliverer; and he marvelled yet more when he led them to Philiphaugh, and to the very spot where, more than thirty years before, he had found the child on the bosom of its dead mother; and there the stranger stood still, and, turning round to those he had delivered—“Here we part,” said he; “hasten to your own house, but tarry not. You will find horses in readiness, and flee into Westmoreland; inquire there for the person to whom this letter is addressed; he will protect you.” And he put a sealed letter into the hands of the old man, and, at the same time he placed a purse in the hands of Daniel, saying, “This will bear your expenses by the way—Farewell!—farewell!” They would have detained him, but he burst away, again exclaiming, as he ran—“Farewell!”

“This is a marvellous deliverance,” said John; “it is a mystery, an’ for him to leave us on this spot—on *this very spot*—where puir Philip——” And here the heart of the old man failed him.

We need not describe the rage of Claverhouse when he found, on the following day, that the prisoners had escaped; and how he examined and threatened the sentinels with death, and cast suspicious glances upon Lieutenant Mow-

bray; but he feared to accuse him, or quarrel with him openly.

As John, with the preacher and his son, approached the house, Mary heard their footsteps, and rushed out to meet them, and fell weeping upon her father's neck. "My bairn!" cried the old man, "we are restored to ye as from the dead! Providence has dealt wi' us in mercy an' in mystery."

His four farm horses were in readiness for their flight; and Mary told him how the same soldier who had saved her from sharing their fate had come to their house at midnight, and assured her that they should not die, and to prepare for their flight. "And," added she, "in token that he who had sent him would keep his promise towards you, he gave me this ring, requesting me to wear it for your deliverer's sake."

"It is Philip's ring!" cried the old man, striking his hand before his eyes, "it is Philip's ring!"

"My Philip's!" exclaimed Mary; "oh, then, he lives! he lives!"

The preacher leaned his brow against the walls of the cottage and groaned.

"It is still a mystery," said the old man, yet pressing his hands before his eyes in agony; "but it is—it maun be him. It was Philip that saved us—that conducted us to the very spot where I found him! But, oh," he added, "I wud rather I had died than lived to ken that he has drawn his sword in the ranks o' the oppressor, and to murder the followers after the truth."

"Oh, dinna think that o' him, father!" exclaimed Mary; "Philip wudna—he couldna draw his sword but to defend the helpless!"

Knowing that they had been pursued and sought after, they hastened their flight to England, to seek the refuge to which their deliverer had directed them. But as they drew near to the Borders, the Rev. Mr. Duncan suddenly exclaimed, "Now, here we must part—part for ever! It is not meet that I should follow ye farther. When the

sheep are pursued by the wolves, the shepherd should not flee from them. Farewell, dear friends—and, oh! farewell to you, Mary! Had it been sinful to hae loved you, I would hae been a guilty man this day—for, oh! beyond a' that is under the sun, ye hae been dear to my heart, and your remembrance has mingled wi' my very devotions. But I maun root it up, though, in so doing, I tear my very heart strings. Fareweel! fareweel! Peace be wi' you; and may ye a' be happier than will ever be the earthly lot o' Andrew Duncan!"

The tears fell upon Mary's cheeks; for, though she could not love she respected the preacher, and she esteemed him for his worth. Her father and brother entreated him to accompany them. "No, no!" he answered; "I see how this flight will end. Go—there is happiness in store for you; but my portion is with the dispersed and the persecuted." And he turned and left them.

Lieutenant Mowbray was disgusted with the cold-blooded butchery of the service in which he was engaged; and, a few days after the escape of John Brydone and his son, he threw up his commission and proceeded to Dumfriesshire. It was a Sabbath evening, and near nightfall; and he wandered into the fields alone, for his spirit was heavy. Sounds of rude laughter broke upon his ear; and, mingled with the sound of laughter, was a voice as if in earnest prayer. He hurried to a small wood from whence the sounds proceeded, and there he beheld four troopers, with their pistols in their hands, and before them was a man who appeared to be a preacher, bound to a tree.

"Come, old Psalmody!" cried one of the troopers, raising his pistol, and addressing their intended victim, who was engaged in prayer; "make ready—we have other jobs on hand—and we gave you time to speak a prayer, but not to preach."

Mowbray rushed forward. He sprang between the troopers and their victim. "Hold; ye murderers, hold!" he exclaimed. "Is it thus that ye disgrace the name of soldiers by washing your hands in the blood of the innocent?"

They knew Mowbray, and they muttered, "You are no officer of ours now; he is our prisoner, and our orders are to shoot every conventical knave who falls into our hands."

"Shame on him who would give such orders," said Mowbray; "and shame on those who would execute them. There," he added, "there is money; I will ransom him."

With an imprecation they took the money that was offered them, and left their prisoner to Mowbray. He approached the tree where they had bound him—he started back—it was the Rev. Andrew Duncan.

"Rash man!" exclaimed Mowbray, as he again stepped forward to unloose the cords that bound him. "Why have ye again cast yourself into the hands of the men who seek your blood? Do ye hold your life so cheap, that in one week ye would risk to sell it twice? Why did not [ye, with your father, your brother, and your *wife*, flee into England, where protection was promised?"

"My father!—my brother!—my wife!—mine!—mine!" repeated the preacher wildly. "There are no such names for my tongue to utter!—none!—none to drop their love's morning dew upon the solitary soul o' Andrew Duncan!"

"Are they murdered?" exclaimed Mowbray, suddenly, in a voice of agony.

"Murdered!" said the preacher, with increased bewilderment. "What do ye mean?—or wha do ye mean?"

"Tell me," cried Mowbray, eagerly, "are not you the husband of Mary Brydone?"

"Me!—me!" cried the preacher. "No, no!—I loved her as the laverock loves the blue lift in spring, and her shadow cam between me and my ain soul; but she wadna hearken unto my voice; she's nae wife o' mine."

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed Mowbray; and he clasped his hands together.

It is necessary, however, that we now accompany John Brydone and his family in their flight into Westmoreland. The letter which their deliverer had put into their hands was addressed to a Sir Frederic Mowbray; and when they

arrived at the house of the old knight, the heart of the aged Covenanter almost failed him for a moment; for it was a proud-looking mansion, and those whom he saw around wore the dress of the Cavaliers.

"Who are ye?" inquired the servant who admitted them to the house.

"Deliver this letter into the hands of your master," said the Covenanter; "our business is with him."

"It is the handwriting of Master Edward," said the servant, as he took the letter into his hand; and, having conducted them to a room, he delivered it to Sir Frederic.

In a few minutes the old knight hurried into the room where the Covenanter and his son and his daughter stood. "Welcome, thrice welcome," he cried, grasping the hand of the old man; "here you shall find a resting-place and a home, with no one to make you afraid."

He ordered wine and food to be placed before them, and he sat down with them.

Now John marvelled at the kindness of his host, and his heart burned within him—and, in the midst of all, he thought of the long lost Philip, and how he had driven him from his house—and his cheek glowed and his heart throbbed with anxiety. His son marvelled also, and Mary's bosom swelled with strange thoughts—tears gathered in her eyes, and she raised the ring that had been the token of her father's deliverance to her lips.

"Oh, sir," said the Covenanter, "pardon the freedom o' a plain blunt man, and o' ane whose bosom is burning wi' anxiety;—but there is a mystery, there is *something* attending my deliverance, and the letter, and your kindness, that I canna see through—and I hope, but I fear—and I canna—I *dawrna* comprehend how it is!—but, as it were, the past—the lang bygone past, and the present, appear to hae met thegither! It is makin' my head dizzy wi' wonder, for there seems in a' this a something that concerns you, and that concerns me, and *one* that I mayna name."

"Your perplexity," said Sir Frederic, "may be best relieved by stating to you, in a few words, one or two cir-

cumstances of my history. Having, from family affliction, left this country, until within these four years I held a commission in the army of the Prince of Orange. I was present at the battle of Seneff; it was my last engagement; and in the regiment which I commanded there was a young Scottish volunteer, to whose bravery, during the battle, I owed my life. In admiration and gratitude for his conduct, I sent for him after the victory, to present him to the prince. He came. I questioned him respecting his birth and his family. He was silent—he burst into tears. I urged him to speak. He said, of his real name he knew nothing—of his family he knew nothing—all that he knew was that he had been the adopted son of a good and a Christian man, who had found him on Philiphaugh, on the lifeless bosom of his mother!

“Merciful Heaven! my puir, injured Philip!” exclaimed the aged Covenanter, wringing his hands.

“My brother!” cried Daniel, eagerly. Mary wept.

“Oh, sir!” continued Sir Frederic, “words cannot paint my feelings as he spoke! I had been at the battle of Philiphaugh! and, not dreaming that a conflict was at hand, my beloved wife, with our infant boy, my little Edward, had joined me but the day before. At the first noise of Lesly’s onset I rushed from our tent—I left my loved ones there!—our army was stricken with confusion—I never beheld them again! I grasped the hand of the youth—I gazed in his face as though my soul would have leaped from my eyelids. ‘Do not deceive me!’ I cried; and he drew from his bosom the ring and the bracelets of my Elizabeth!”

Here the old knight paused and wept, and the tears ran down the cheeks of John Brydone, and the cheeks of his children.

They had not been many days in Westmoreland, and they were seated around the hospitable hearth of the good knight in peace, when two horsemen arrived at the door.

“It is our friend, Mr. Duncan, and a stranger!” said the Covenanter, as he beheld them from the window.

“They are welcome—for your sake, they are welcome,” said Sir Frederic; and while he yet spoke, the strangers entered. “My son, my son!” he continued, and hurried forward to meet him.

“Say also your *daughter!*” said Edward Mowbray, as he approached towards Mary, and pressed her to his breast.

“Philip!—my own Philip!” exclaimed Mary, and speech failed her.

“My brother!” cried Daniel.

“He was dead and is alive again—he was lost and is found,” exclaimed John. “O Philip, man! do ye forgi’e me?”

The adopted son pressed the hand of his foster-father.

“Yes, he forgives you!” exclaimed Mr. Duncan; “and he has forgiven me. When we were in prison and in bonds waiting for death he risked his life to deliver us, and he did deliver us; and a second time he has rescued me from the sword of the destroyer, and from the power of the men who thirsted for my blood. He is no enemy o’ the Covenant—he is the defender o’ the persecuted; and the blessing o’ Andrew Duncan is all he can bequeath for a life twice saved, upon his deliverer, and Mary Brydone.”

Need we say that Mary bestowed her hand upon Edward Mowbray; but in the fondness of her heart she still called him “her Philip!”

BILL STANLEY;

OR, A SAILOR'S STORY.

—o—

READER, if thou hast never visited the Fern Isles, but intendest to visit them, thou hast a pleasure in reserve—a positive, downright, profitable pleasure—profitable as regards the health of the body, for a trip upon the sea makes the blood feel ten years younger, and dance in the veins as merrily as the waves around us; and profitable also to the mind, by filling it with fresh objects for wonder and contemplation; and it is a fact very generally overlooked, that the poor jaded mind stands as much in need of new objects to work upon as its plebeian neighbour, the body, stands in need of rest or change of diet. It is a matter of small consequence, whether you go in a yacht or a steamer; in the former you will have as much pleasure, in the latter more punctuality. But it is a matter of much consequence what sort of company you have on board—in a word, what materials your fellow-voyagers are made of. If they be all your exceedingly good-natured sort of people—people bowed down with politeness and a desire to please—you won't be half an hour at sea till you find them dead as uncorked small beer that has stood an hour in the sun, or insipid as milk and water. I had as lief dine upon dried veal as be mewed up a day with such society. If you wish to relish the company, and to see character developed, be careful to have it sprinkled with the salt, the pepper, and the mustard of human dispositions; as for the vinegar, even a drop of that would be too much. Sickness might improve your health for the future, but would impair your pleasure for the present; and, in truth, sea-sickness appears to be as pale, ghostly, and uncomfortable a companion as a man may meet withal. But,

if the day be fine, and the breeze moderate, there is but little chance of your being sick. At any rate, you will find about half a pound of well boiled ham, just as the vessel kisses the salt water, an excellent preventive, and half the pleasure of a sea trip lies in the relish, the *salt*, which it gives to the homeliest morsel.

When the Ferns were first seen, what appeared but two, or at most three islands, are now found to be a cluster of sixteen or twenty—the ocean homes of ten thousand times ten thousand sea fowls; which now may be seen rising in myriads, blackening the air and covering the surface of the islands, as if a thunder-cloud hung over them—anon their snowy wings flash in the sunbeams, countless specks of light begem the seeming cloud, and, flickering for a moment, assume the appearance of a magnificent rainbow instinct with motion—and, again, as if turning from the flashing of their own beautiful plumage, settle like darkness on the rocks. To appreciate the striking effect of these islands it is necessary to sail round them, as well as to land upon them. Each appears to be surrounded by a pier or bulwark of nature's masonry. What is termed the Pinnacle Island is the most effective. We have been informed that it bears a strong resemblance to St. Helena—the grave of Europe's conqueror. The pinnacles are a mass of perpendicular rocks, representing towers, battlements, and fortifications, apparently as perfect to the eye as if formed by the hands of man, but that their terrible strength seems to frown in mockery on his puny efforts. They, alone, are worth visiting again and again. They make man feel his own insignificance, and the power of the Omnipotent voice that called into existence the mighty ocean, and the wonders of its bosom. Burns, on visiting a place in the Highlands, said it was "enough to make a blockhead a poet;" and we say that the man who could visit the Fern Isles without feeling the influence of poetry within him has a head as stupid as the sea-fowl that inhabit them, and an imagination as impenetrable as the rocks that compose the pinnacles.

About three years ago, a mixed party left Newcastle in a

steamer, on a pleasure excursion to the islands. Amongst the company, there was a man of a weather-beaten but happy and intelligent countenance, whose age seemed to be at least sixty, and whose general appearance and manners indicated that he was an old seaman, and perhaps had been a purser or a sailing-master in the navy, or the commander of a merchant-man, who had made enough to enable him to cast anchor ashore, in peace, quiet, and plenty, for the remainder of his days. His shrewdness, his knowledge, and his humour soon rendered him a favourite with the company.

On arriving at the islands the party went on shore; and, dividing themselves into groups, sat down, and spread out their provisions on the rocks; about a dozen prevailed upon the old sailor to accompany them, and to be their messmate. After dinner they began to sing, and the old tar was called upon for a song.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I never could raise a single stave in my life; but, if it's all one to you, I will spin you a sailor's yarn."

"Agreed," cried they—"all! all!"

"Well," began the old seaman, "it was a year or two before the short peace of Amiens, that two young seamen were sitting in a public-house in North Shields, which I shall please to speak of as the sign of the Old Ship; and its landlord I shall call Mr. Danvers. The name of the one sailor was William Stanley, the other Jack Jenkins. Jack was but a plain fellow, though no lubber; but Bill was a glorious young fellow—the admiration of everybody; though only the son of a poor laundress, who wrought hard to bring him up, while a boy he had contrived to get knowledge and book-learning enough to have been made commodore of a college. I may here tell you, too, that old Danvers had a daughter called Mary—one of the best and prettiest girls on all Tyneside. She was Bill's consort on all occasions; and they were true to each other as a needle is to the pole. Jack and he were friends and shipmates; and being sitting together—

'I say, Bill,' said his comrade, 'as we are to sail upon a

long voyage to-morrow, what say you for a run up to Newcastle to the theatre to-night? You shall take Polly Danvers and I shall take my old woman.' For Jack was married.

'It is of no use thinking of it,' answered he; 'I am brought up here as though it were my last mooring.'

'Whew! whew!' whistled the other—'with pretty Polly for a chain cable. But I don't ask you to part company with each other. So let us make ready and start.'

'No,' added Stanley, 'the best play and the best actors in the world would be to me to-night like a land-lubber sitting smiling and piping upon a flute on the sand-banks, while I was being dashed to pieces by the breakers under his feet.'

'What are you drifting at, Bill?' said Jenkins; 'your upper works seems to have hoisted a moon-raker.'

'I am unhappy, Jack,' said he, earnestly, 'and the cause presses like lead upon my heart. It throbs like fire within my forehead. For more than twenty years I have been tossed about as a helmless vessel, without compass or reckoning. It is hard, Jack, that I can't mention my mother's name, but the blush upon my cheek must dry up the tear that falls for her memory. Three months ago, as you know, I came home, with the earnings of a two years' voyage in my pocket, and I found——O shipmate, when I expected to have flung my savings into my mother's lap, I found her dying in a miserable garret, with scarce a blanket to cover her! She had been long ill; and the rich old rascal called Wates (who came to this part of the country some years ago) seized all but the straw on which she lay for his rent. I thought my heart had burst as I flung myself upon the ground by her side. A mist came over my eyes. I neither knew what I saw nor heard. I felt her cold arms clinging round my neck. She spoke—she told me *my father's name*! Comrade! it was the first time I had heard it! The word father pierced my heart like a dagger, and, in my agony, I knew not what she said. I started, I entreated her to repeat it again! But my mother was silent!—she was dead!—the arms of a corpse were fastened round my neck. With the

breath which uttered the name she had not spoken for more than twenty years, her spirit fled!—and I—I cannot remember it.'

'Vast there, Bill!' cried Jack, wiping a tear from his eyes; 'that is tragedy enough without going to the play for it. But, for the sake of Mary Danvers, the prettiest girl on Tyneside (not even excepting my old woman), cheer up, my lad!'

'If that should cheer me,' said he, 'I believe it is the principal cause why I am sad to-day.'

'Why then,' said Jack, 'don't you take an example by me, and run your frigate to church at once? You will find a plain gold ring is a precious fast anchor.'

'But what,' replied Stanley, 'if the old commodore, her father, won't allow me to take her in tow?'

'He won't,' cried Jenkins—'that's a good 'un! Old dad Danvers won't allow you to splice with her? What's his reason? I'm sure he can't say but you are as sober as the chief judge of the Admiralty.'

'To-night,' replied Stanley, in a tone of agitation, 'he found her in my company, and called, or rather dragged her away; and, as they went, I heard him upbraid her bitterly, and ask if the meanness of her spirit would permit her to throw herself away upon——upon'——William became more agitated, the words he had to utter seemed to stick in his throat; and his friend Jenkins exclaimed—'Upon a better man than ever he was in his life! But what did he say, Bill—upon what was she going to throw herself away?'

'Upon a beggar's nameless *bastard*! he said,' groaned poor Stanley, striking his hand upon his brow.

'What d'ye say?' cried Jenkins, clenching his fist; 'had the old fellow's ribs not been removed off the first letter, this hand had shivered them! Flesh and blood, Stanley, how did ye endure it?'

'I started to my feet,' said he; 'my teeth grated together; but I heard her gentle voice reproving him for the word; and it fell upon my heart like the moon upon the sea, Jack, after a storm. My hand fell by my side. He is her father,

thought I; and for the first time in his life, Will Stanley brooked an affront.'

Just as he was speaking, a gentle tap came to the door. 'Good night, Jack,' added he; 'I understand the signal; the old cruiser is off the coast, and now for the smuggling trade.'

I may tell you that the reason why old Danvers was so averse to his daughter keeping company with Bill Stanley was, that there was a hypocritical middle-aged villain, called Squire Wates—(the same that Bill spoke of as having sold off his mother, and left her to die upon straw)—I hate the very name of the old rascal. Well, you see, this same Squire Wates that I am telling you of came from abroad somewhere, and bought a vast deal of property about Shields. He was said to be as rich as an Exchange Jew—and perhaps he was. He had cast an eye upon Mary Danvers, and the grey-haired rascal sought, through the agency of his paltry yellow dross, to accomplish the destruction of the innocent and beautiful creature; and thinking that Will Stanley was an obstacle to the accomplishment of his purpose, he determined to have him removed. He also persuaded old Danvers that he wished to make his daughter his wife. Conscience!—after half drowning such a hoary-headed knave, I would have hung him up at the yard arm, without judge or jury, and buried him in a dunghill without benefit of clergy. He employed a fellow of the name of Villars as a confederate in his base intentions—one who had been thrice a bankrupt, without being able to show a loss that he had sustained, or pay a shilling to his creditors. This creature he professed to set up in business—in something connected with the West India trade—and he prevailed on landlord Danvers to embark in the speculation, and to risk all that he had saved in the Old Ship for five-and-twenty years. So that the firm—if such a disgraceful transaction might be called by that appellation—went by the designation of *Villars and Danvers*. The firm, however, was altogether an invention of Wates, to promote his designs. There was another whom they engaged in their scheme—a fellow who was a disgrace to the sea—the very

spawn of salt water—a boatswain Rigby; and the frigate to which he belonged was cruising upon the coast for the protection of the coasters. But you will hear more about these worthies by-and-by.

It was within a few hours of the time, when, as I told you before, Bill Stanley and Jack Jenkins were to sail upon a twelvemonth's voyage. The vessel to which they belonged was lying out in the harbour below Tynemouth Castle, and sweethearts and wives were accompanying the crew to the beach, where a boat was waiting to take them aboard.

Mary had ventured to accompany William part of the way towards the beach, to bid him adieu; and when, through fear of her father finding them together, she would have returned, he held her hand more firmly within his, and said, 'Fear nothing, love; it is the last time we shall see each other for twelve months. Come down as far as the boat; and do not let it be said, when it pulls off, that Bill Stanley was the only soul in the ship's crew that had not a living creature on the shore to wave *good-bye* to—or one to drop a tear for his departure, more than if he were a dog. If I be alone and an outcast in the world, do not let me feel it now.'

'Willingly,' she replied, 'would I follow you, not only there, but to the ends of the earth. But my father will be on the beach watching the boat; or, if he be not, the spies of another will be there, and my accompanying you would only make my persecution the greater during your absence.'

'What!' exclaimed he, 'have I then a rival for your affections, one that I know not of, and whose addresses are backed by your father's influence? Who is he?—or what is his name? Tell me, Mary—I conjure you, by your plighted faith.'

'Give not the name of a rival,' said she, 'to a hypocritical wretch whose heart I would not tread beneath my heel for fear of pollution! A rival!—William, I would not insult the meanest reptile that feeds upon garbage by placing it in competition with a hypocrite so base and mean! A rival!—rather would I breathe the vapours of a ploughed charnel-

house for ever than be blasted with his breath for a single hour! No—my heart is yours—it is wholly yours—fear not.'

'Mary,' said he, solemnly, 'if I am worthy of your love, I am not unworthy of your confidence. You would not, you could not, bestow such language on the most worthless, where personal indignity had not been offered, or intended you. Name him, I adjure—nay, I *command* you,' he added wildly; 'it will yet be three hours till the vessel sail, and in that period I will avenge the indignity that has been offered to you.'

'Speak not of such a thing,' said she; 'whatever be his designs, against such a persecutor she is a weak woman who cannot defend herself. Would you raise your hand against a worm, or draw a sword against a venomous fly? Come, think not of it—look not so; would a vessel of the line throw a broadside into a paltry cock-boat? Punish him!—no, despise him!'

'It may be so,' he rejoined; 'but my heart is to yours as the eyelid is to the eye-ball, and even a moth between them causes agony. Name him, that I may judge of his power to do evil, or the vessel which is this day to sail—sails without me.'

'Then, that your contempt may equal mine,' added she, 'think of the creature *Wates*! He whose name stands first on the list of *published* charities—and who sends the newsman abroad to trumpet his piety, while villany lurks in his grey hairs.'

'What!' he exclaimed wildly—'*Wates*! the murderer of my mother!—who sent his minions to sell the very bed from beneath her, and left her to perish on the ground! Justice! where sleep thy thunderbolts! Mary, we shall return—I go not to sea to-day!'

'William,' said she affectionately, 'do you then fear to trust me? Did he carry honours in his right hand, and in his left the wealth of the world, and lay them both at my feet—I feel that within me that would spurn them from me as I would an insect that crawled upon me to sting me.

To you would I give my hand and beg for a subsistence, rather than share with him the throne of an empire. What then do you fear? In your own words, if I am unworthy of your confidence, I am unworthy of your love.'

'No, Mary!' he cried, 'it is not fear. Wrong not yourself, neither wrong my bosom, that is full to bursting, by harbouring such a thought. When darkness issues from the sunbeams, I will doubt your affection; when a whirlwind sweeps across the sea, and the billows rise not at its voice, I will fear your truth—not till then. But I know that to associate the name of the most virtuous woman with that of a villain, is to make the world suspect her. Ah, Mary! in the innocence of your own heart you suspect not the iniquity of which some are capable. Let the name of libertine be attached to the character of a man, and especially of a rich man, till his crimes are heaped up like a world of sin upon the shoulders of their contemptible author, and the next sun that rises, in the eyes of the world, melts away their enormity, if not their remembrance; but if the mere shadow of such a villain's breath pass over the character of a woman, its stains will remain fixed and immovable, growing in blackness and gathering misery, until life and memory have made their last port. I will not speak of revenge, to distress you—but I shall not undertake this voyage. I will remain on shore, not to guard your innocence, but to protect your name from slander.'

'William,' she answered, 'ignorant of the world I may be; but I know that your remaining on shore would only give rise to the calumnies which you would wish to prevent. You would make yourself an object for the laughter and remarks of your shipmates; and would disoblige your owners, who, after this voyage, have promised you the command of a vessel. And for what would you do this, but through fear of a wretch on whom I could not waste a single thought, and on whom I regret that I have thrown away a single word.'

At that moment Jack Jenkins, with his wife Betty, weeping like a mermaid, under his arm, hove in sight, and the

moment he beheld his comrade he called out, 'Hullo, Bill! how did you and Polly manage to pass the old commodore of "*the ship*;" I saw him keeping a look-out abaft there.' But his wife sobbed while he was speaking, and as he approached his shipmate, he continued—'Tack aback in time, Bill, and don't marry—I ask your pardon, Polly, and yours too, Betty, my love,' kissing his wife's cheeks; 'I don't exactly mean not to marry either—but this parting company breaks up one's heart, like an old fir-built craft that is not fit for firewood. I wish the lubber's back had a round dozen that invented the word—*good-bye*! It always sticks in my throat, like pushing a piece of old junk down it.'

While he was speaking, a king's cutter shot round a point of land, with a pack of lobsters abaft; and the black fellow, Boatswain Rigby, sat in her bow. She was within twenty yards from where they stood.

'Fly, William!—fly!' said Mary, wildly; 'it is you that they seek—my heart tells me it is you—oh, fly!'

'Be not afraid, dearest,' said Stanley; 'I do not think they mean harm to us, and if they did flight is impossible.'

'Oh, run! run!' cried Betty Jenkins; 'see—the marines are handling their muskets.'

'Run! why, it's of no use running,' said her husband; 'the lobsters would bring a fellow up with their pepper-boxes before he could run a quarter of a cable's length.'

The boat took the ground, and Rigby, with a party of sailors and marines, sprang on shore.

'Well, my hearties,' said the boatswain, 'will either of you volunteer to serve his Majesty?'

'Why, sir——' Jack Jenkins was replying, when his wife placed her hand upon his mouth, saying, 'Are you a fool, Jack?'

'What!' said the boatswain, 'no volunteers! Well, we want but one of you. This is our man,' and he touched Stanley on the shoulder with his cutlass.

'Oh!' cried Mary, addressing the boatswain, as she fell upon William's neck; 'spare him! spare him! and with

my last coin I will endeavour to procure a substitute in his stead.'

'It won't do, my pretty maiden,' said Rigby; 'in these times we can't lose so promising a prize for a woman's tears. Marines, to the boat with him!'

'Hold! servile slaves!' cried Stanley, as they attempted to drag him away; 'allow me to bid adieu to my Mary, and to my friends here, or I defy the worst you can do.'

'Quick then,' said Rigby, 'the service cannot wait for farewells.'

Mary still clung to William's arm. 'Good-bye, Jack,' said he, with the salt water rolling in his eyes, and his heart ready to burst—'and when you return from the voyage, see that you keep the land-sharks off my poor Mary, for the sake of your old messmate.'

'Belay, Bill!' cried Jenkins; 'my heart's afloat. Heaven bless you, lad, and be at ease respecting Polly. Should any lubber pull alongside, my name's not Jenkins if I don't force him to strike his colours, and shove off with broken timbers. Good-bye, Bill—give me your hand; and, though they were my last words, I say—I'm blowed if ever I shook the flipper of a better fellow!'

'Mary!' sobbed he, pressing her to his heart; 'farewell, love!—we shall meet again!—you won't forget Bill Stanley!'

'Stay! oh, stay!' she exclaimed. But the boatswain waved his hand impatiently, and his crew rudely tearing them asunder, William Stanley was dragged to the boat, and borne on board the frigate.

Well, twelve months passed, after the impressment of William Stanley, and Squire Wates found that his wealth offered no temptation to Mary Danvers, to enable him to effect her ruin. He, however, had inveigled her father into his meshes; and through the pretended failure of the mercantile speculation in which Villars and old Danvers had been engaged, the former brought a claim of five hundred pounds against the latter, who had lost his all. And the plan of the villains was that Villars should cast the old man into prison,

and that Wates should come forward, and professing to pay the debt, set the father at liberty, and obtain, through the daughter's gratitude, what her virtue spurned. To ensure success to this master-stroke of their wickedness it was to be attended by a mock marriage, in which Boatswain Rigby (the frigate to which he belonged being again lying off Tyne-mouth), was, for a *consideration*, to officiate as chaplain.

It was on the very day that this piece of iniquity was hatched that Jack Jenkins, having returned—and having learned from his wife, and from Mary Danvers, of some of the attempts that had been made by Squire Wates, during his absence, and since the impressment of his comrade—hurried to the house of the old rascal, with a rope's end in his hand. He found the street door open, and, without knocking, he went to the foot of the stairs, and demanded to see Squire Wates.

'You can't see him, fellow,' said a portly, pampered manservant.

'Can't see him,' roared Jack; 'he shall see me presently, and feel me too. So come along, Mr. Powdered-pate; show me where he is, or I'll capsize you head and heels.'

The old villain himself, hearing the uproar, came blustering out of a room, crying—'Who are you, fellow? and how dare you, in such a manner, break into my house? What is your business with me?'

'Vast there with your questions, old leprous-livered knave! vociferated Jenkins. 'As to who I am, I am a better fellow than ever stood in your shoes; and as to daring to break into your house, before I leave it I shall dare to break your head! And as to my business with you, I intend to make you *sensible* of that too,' and as he uttered the word *sensible*, he shook the piece of rope in his hand, and continued—'Now, I have answered your questions, answer one to me. Do you remember a lad of the name of Bill Stanley—eh?'

The squire shook with terror; but endeavouring to assume an air of authority, stammered out—'No—no—fellow; I—I know no such person. Begone, sir. Be—begone, I say.'

‘Smash me if I do!’ added Jenkins. ‘And belike you don’t know Poly Danvers, either? Well, perhaps this piece of old junk may sharpen your memory!’

Wates called upon his servants for assistance.

‘Hands off, ye beggarly swabs! or kiss the boatswain’s sister!’ continued the sailor, laying lustily around him, and causing the domestics to shrink back. ‘Vast there!’ he continued, laying hold of the squire, who attempted to escape; ‘not so fast—I an’t quite done with you yet. Now, you see, I’m an old friend and shipmate of Bill Stanley’s; and the day that he was pressed, and you were the cause of it, Bill says to me—‘Jack,’ says he, ‘when I am away see that no land-shark come alongside my Polly.’ ‘Fear nothing, Bill,’ says I, ‘hang me if I don’t—there’s my hand on’t.’ Now, I’ve been at sea ever since, until the other day, and my old woman tells me that you, you cream-faced scoundrel, not only had the impudence to pull alongside Polly Danvers, but had the audacity to propose——shiver me if I can name it—but take that!’

And so saying he began to lay the rope fiercely round the shoulders of his victim; and as the servants again closed upon the sailor to rescue their master he dashed them to the ground, to the right and to the left, and finally rushed out of the house, crying—‘Who shall say that Jack is the lad that would break his promise?’

I told you it was a part of the plot of Wates that his confederate, Villars, was to cast old Danvers into prison on account of the pretended debt. The old landlord was sitting in the parlour of the ‘Old Ship,’ trembling at the horrors of a jail, and fearing every moment the entrance of a sheriff’s officer to arrest him, while his wife and daughter endeavoured to comfort him, and he said mournfully—‘Wife, ater being-married thirty years as we have been, I did not expect that we should have been parted in this way. I did not think that, after toiling in the ‘Old Ship’ here for twenty years, to save a matter of money for our daughter, that I should lose all, and my hair grow white in a prison. But it is of no use mourning about it; for I question if those for whom we

wished the money would have thanked us. I know I would not have seen a father or mother of mine dragged to jail like a common thief, if I by any means could have prevented it.' And as he spoke, he cast a look of sorrow and upbraiding upon Mary, who wept on her mother's shoulder.

'Don't be cruel, husband,' said his wife, 'how can you distress our daughter? I am sure she can't help the state we are reduced to, any more than I can. But I always said what all your jobbing and trafficking in company with the bankrupt Villars would end in. I know thou'rt suffering enough, and we are all suffering; but don't be reflecting upon our dear Mary, for a better child never parents had.'

'I an't making reflections,' replied he, peevishly; 'only I'm saying I would not have stood so by my father. It is no reflection to say that Mary might have been a lady, and then I am sure I should not have been dragged from this parlour—where I have sat for twenty years—to a dungeon in a jail.'

'Father!' said Mary, 'what would you have me do? Would you have me become an object for the virtuous to shun, for your enemies to triumph over and despise, and for the abandoned to insult? Would you have me to sell my purity, my peace of mind, my present and eternal happiness, to a miscreant who carries sanctity on his brow, and morality between his teeth, while his heart is a putrid sepulchre? Would you have me do this to save you from a prison?—and to which you have been brought by your own simplicity. To assist you I would become the servant of servants—I would brush the dust from the shoes of strangers, in this house where I was born. But while the tear blanches my cheeks for your misfortunes, cause them not to burn with shame.'

'Why, daughter,' replied he angrily, 'I don't understand thy high words at all. But though I don't know so much of my dictionary as thou dost, I know these books you have read have turned thy head with foolish and high notions. I know you won't have Mr. Wates, because he is thought oldish, and belike doesn't make love like one of the romance

sparks you read about. But, I say, I'm neither blind nor deaf, and, for all that you have said, I know as how it is marriage and nought else that Mr. Wates intends. But, rich as he is, you won't have him, but will see your poor old father dragged through the streets, like a thief to a prison. O Mary! it is a sore thing to have an ungrateful child!

'O husband!—husband!' said Mrs. Danvers; 'they were thy high notions, and none of our dear daughter's that has brought us to this. But it is not my part to add to thy sorrow when thou art about to be torn from my side. Alack! I never thought to be made a widow in this sort.'

'Wife!—wife!' cried he, impatiently; 'be it my blame, or whose blame it may, we can't make a better of it now; but it is very hard to have lost the earnings of twenty years, and to be parted from wife and child. Don't be angry with me, daughter. Your father meant all he has said or done for your good. Come, give your old father a kiss and forgive him. It may be the last he will ever receive from you in his own house.'

She threw her arms around his neck and wept; and while the father and daughter embraced each other a sheriff's officer entered the house.

'Well-a-day!—well-a-day!' cried Mrs. Danvers as she perceived him; 'thy errand, and the disgrace of it, will break my heart.'

'Don't be distressed, good woman,' said the officer, 'it is no such disgrace but that many of the best in the country must submit to it every day. Mr. Danvers,' added he, 'I am sorry to inform you that you must walk with me. This paper will inform you, you are my prisoner.'

'It is very hard,' said the old man; 'I say, sir, it is very hard to be called a prisoner in a free country, for doing nothing at all. Heaven knows about this here debt that is brought against me, for I don't. But I know that locking me up in a jail won't pay it.'

'O, cruel law!' exclaimed Mary; 'framed by fools, and put in force by usurers. Let justice laugh at the wise legis-

lators who shut up the springs and expect the reservoirs to be filled.'

'Why, miss,' said the official, 'I didn't make the law; I be only the officer of the law. So come along, Mr. Danvers, my good man, for I can't stop all day to hear your daughter's speeches. I have other jobs of the same sort in hand, and business must be attended to.'

'Go, unfeeling man,' answered Mary, 'we will go with you. Bear with misfortune, my dear father, like a man. I will accompany you—take my arm. If I have hung upon yours with pride upon more joyful occasions, it shall not be said that I was ashamed for you to rest upon mine when they led you through the streets to a prison.' And she accompanied him to the place of confinement.

It was two days after old Danvers had been taken to prison that the frigate in which William Stanley had been impressed made towards the land, and rode off the mouth of the Tyne, while a boat's crew were ordered on shore. Boat-swain Rigby, apprehensive that William would request to be one of them, and that his request might be granted, had, previous to the boat leaving the vessel, sought to quarrel with him, and struck him; and requested of the lieutenant that, in consequence of the insolence he had used towards him, he should not be permitted to go on shore, but, as a punishment, placed on duty.

Poor Stanley was walking the deck, saying unto himself—'Refused permission to go on shore! Yes, Rigby! petty tyrant as thou art, thou shalt rue it! Refused a privilege that would have caused a slave to rebel, had he been denied it. But the time will come when we shall meet upon terms of equality; and were his cowardice equal to his brutality—yea, were he shielded by a breast-plate hard as his own heart—my revenge shall find a passage through both; and his blood shall wash out the impression and the shame of the blow with which to-day he dared to smite me as a dog. The remembrance of that blow sticks as a dagger in my throat—its remembrance chokes me!' And hurried on by the agitation of his feelings he spoke aloud as he continued—'Not

only denied to set my foot upon the place of my nativity, but struck!—yes, struck like a hound, by a creature I despise! O memory!’ he added, ‘torture me not! Here, every remembered object strikes painfully upon my eyeballs! The church and the churchyard where my mother’s body now mingles with the dust are now before me, and I am prohibited from shedding a tear upon her grave. The banks of the Tyne, where I wandered with my Mary, while it sighed affection by our side, and the blue sea, which lay behind us, raising a song of love, are now visible—but though they are still beautiful they are as beautiful things that lived and were loved, but are now dead!’

In the intensity of his feelings he perceived not a boat which drew alongside; and, while he yet stood in a reverie, his old crony, Jack Jenkins, sprang on board, and, assisted by a waterman, raised Mary Danvers to the deck.

‘Yonder he is,’ exclaimed Jack, ‘leaning over the gunwale, as melancholy as a merman making his last will and testament in the presence of his father Neptune.’

Stanley started round at the voice of his friend; he beheld his betrothed wife; for you know they were the same as betrothed—they had vowed to be true to each other, and I believe broken a ring betwixt them.

‘My own Mary!’ he cried, and sprang forward to meet her. The poor things fell upon each other’s neck, and wept like children.

‘Shove me your fist, my hearty,’ cried Jenkins, ‘as soon as you have done there. I thought I would give you a bit of an agreeable surprise.’

‘There, Jack!—there, my honest old friend!’ cried Bill, stretching out his one hand, and with the other supporting his sweetheart. ‘My head and heart are scudding beneath a sudden tempest of joy! Speak, Mary, love; let me again hear your voice thrilling like music through my breast! O Jack! this visit is like one who has been run down in a squall at midnight, and ere he is aware that the waters have covered over him he finds himself aloft, listening to the harps of the happy.’

‘I don’t know what it is like, Bill,’ said the other; ‘but it an’t like the meetings we used to have.’

‘Why so silent, love?’ said William, addressing Mary; ‘in another hour I shall be off duty, and in one day of happiness let us forget the past.’

‘Dear William,’ she replied, ‘I know not what I should say nor what I should conceal. I have so little of joy to communicate that I would not embitter the pleasure of the present short hour by a recital of the events that have occurred during your absence.’

‘Hide nothing from me, Mary,’ said he earnestly; ‘but tell me, have my forebodings regarding the monster Wates been but too true? Or are your parents——You tremble, love—you are pale! O Jenkins, speak!—tell me what is the meaning of this?’

‘Drop it, Bill, my dear fellow,’ said the other, ‘drop it. You have got Polly alongside of you there, with a heart as sound and true as when you left her; and don’t distress her with questions; she didn’t come aboard for that. I served out the old fellow Wates, as you requested me, with a rope’s end, t’other night, and that pretty smartly, too. And, with regard to father Danvers, why, poor soul, somehow or other, misfortune has got the weather-gauge of him, and the other day he was taken to jail. So, say no more about it, Bill—we can’t mend it.’

‘Why,’ he exclaimed, stamping his foot as he spoke, ‘why am I a slave? And who, my beloved Mary—who now shall protect you? But I can still do something. I have a bank bill for a hundred pounds, and savings of former voyages. I know not why I took it out of my locker this morning. I had it carefully placed away with the ringlet which I cut from your brow, dearest. Here are both; I will keep the ringlet, and think it dearer than ever; take you the note, my love; it may be of service to your father.’

‘No, no, William,’ she cried, ‘I must not, I cannot! Dearest, most generous of men, do not *pity* me, or I shall wither in your sight. Look on me as you were wont. But, oh! let me not stand before you as a beggar. Keep it—as

you love me, keep it—make me not ashamed to look in your face.'

'Then take it, Jack, take it,' said Stanley, handing him the note; 'do with it as I desire. Say nothing more now; for here comes our Boatswain Rigby, the curse of our ship's crew and the disgrace of the service.'

Mary shuddered as Rigby approached them; and boisterously said, 'Who have you got there, fellow, and you upon duty? I shall report you instantly. Some of your old friends, and meditating an escape with them, I see.' And, turning to Jenkins, he added, 'Who, sir, gave you permission to come on board this vessel, and to bring *a woman of that description* with you? Off, instantly, or I shall detain you too. You, girl, must remain;' and he approached her familiarly to take her by the arm. Stanley sprang forward, exclaiming, 'Hold, sir, hold! You have insulted by your words; but touch not, as you would remain a living man, the hem of her garment.'

'Begone to your duty, presumptuous slave!' cried the boatswain, fiercely; 'begone!' And as he spoke, he raised his hand, and struck him on the breast.

'Again!—ha!—ha!—ha!' exclaimed William, like a demon laughing through excess of torture; 'twice you have struck me, Rigby, to-day!—struck me in the presence of her who is dearer to me than life! Now, Heaven have mercy on thee!' And, seizing the boatswain by the breast, he hurled him violently on the deck and planted his foot upon his bosom.

'William!—dear William!' cried Mary; 'forbear!—forbear!'

'Bill, Bill, my dear fellow!' cried Jack, 'don't lose your life for the sake of a ruffian.'

William continued standing with his foot upon his breast, laughing in the same wild and fearful manner, and shouting—'Struck me!' while Rigby called for help. A number of the ship's crew sprang forward to the rescue of the boatswain, who rising, cried, 'The irons instantly! Set a double watch over him! He has attempted, as ye have witnessed,

the life of an officer, and his first promotion shall be the yard-arm.'

While they were placing the irons upon him Mary threw herself at Rigby's feet, exclaiming, 'Oh, spare him!—save the life of my William!—by her that bore you, or that loves you, save him!—save him!'

'Rise, Mary!' cried William, 'that our farewell glance be not one of reproach. Pray for vengeance on my enemy. Farewell, Jack—for ever this time! See my Mary safe!' And as they were bearing him away he turned his head towards her, and cried, 'Dearest, we shall meet hereafter where the villain and tyrant cannot enter.'

She fell insensible on the deck, and, in a state of unconsciousness, was conveyed on shore by Jenkins.

The frigate was commanded by Captain Sherbourne, and when the officers were assembled to hold a court-martial over poor Stanley he said, addressing Rigby, 'There is not a man in the British Navy, Boatswain Rigby, more determined than myself to preserve order and discipline; but while, as captain of this vessel, I am compelled to enforce the law, I am no advocate for the inhuman and degrading lash; nor can I, with indifference, sentence a brave fellow to be hung up for doing that which the best feelings of his nature, and the sentiments of a hero, prompted him to do. I sit here as judge, and am neither advocate for the prisoner nor your accuser; but, if the law must be satisfied, the offence, wherever it is found, shall be punished, whether in the accused or in the accuser; for it has not escaped my observation that no officer under me has ever found a fault in the prisoner, save yourself. Are you then resolved and prepared to prosecute your charge?'

'I am both resolved and prepared, Captain Sherbourne,' said Rigby; 'and I demand the satisfaction of the laws of my country and the service, not only as an officer that has been insulted and injured, but as a British officer and subject whose life has been attempted.'

'This is a serious charge, boatswain,' said Captain Sherbourne; 'let the prisoner be brought forward.'

The culprit was brought up, guarded, and in fetters, and, being placed before his judges, 'Prisoner,' began the captain, 'I deeply regret that one of your appearance, and of your uniform excellent conduct and courage, while under my command, should be brought before me under such circumstances as those in which you now stand; and I regret the more that if the charges be proved the proofs of your former character and courage, which are known to us, will be of no avail. You are charged not only with striking your commanding officer, which is itself a heinous offence, but also with attempting his life. Do you plead guilty or not guilty?'

'That,' replied the prisoner, 'is as your honour pleases to interpret the deed. But there is no such charge reckoned against me in the log book aloft.'

'You then plead not guilty,' said the captain.

'I am guilty,' answered he, 'of having acted as it was the duty of a man to act. I am guilty of having convinced a villain that a proud heart may be found beneath a plain blue jacket. I am guilty of having proved that there are souls and feelings before the mast as high-minded and as keen as upon the quarter-deck. But the head and front of my offending hath this extent, no more.'

'He speaks bravely,' muttered some of those who heard him; 'the chaplain himself couldn't have said it so well by half.'

'Boatswain,' said the captain, in the hearing of the prisoner, 'state the particulars of your charge against him.'

'While it was his turn on duty,' said Rigby, 'I found him neglecting it, and plotting his escape from the frigate in conversation with a suspicious-looking man and a girl of common fame——'

'Tis false—despicable recreant!—'tis false!' interrupted William wildly; 'she is spotless as the fountains of light! Breathe again dishonour on her name and these chains that bind me shall hurl you, with the falsehood blistering on your tongue, down to——'

'Silence, young man!' interposed the captain, 'I command you. If you have cause of complaint you will after-

wards be heard. You may be mistaken, Mr. Rigby, regarding the character of the young woman, and you will not better your cause in our eyes by unnecessarily blackening the prisoner's.'

'Captain Sherbourne,' inquired the boatswain, in an offended tone, 'do you question my honour?'

'I permit no such interruptions, sir,' said the captain; 'we sit here to deal with facts, not with honour. Go on with your charge.'

'When,' resumed Rigby, 'I overheard him plotting his escape from the service, and commanded him to his duty, he haughtily rebelled; and on my ordering the stranger on shore, he sprang forward, and dashing me on the deck, stamped his foot upon my breast, threatening and attempting to murder me, as these witnesses will prove.'

'Stand forward, my good fellows,' said Captain Sherbourne, addressing two of the seamen, who had been witnesses of the assault, and assisted in rescuing the boatswain. 'Give your evidence truly. What do you know of this affair?'

'Why, your honour,' said the first seaman, 'just that the boatswain was lying upon the deck, and that Bill there had his foot upon his breast.'

'Do you suppose,' inquired the captain, 'he had a design upon his life?'

'Please your honour,' answered the seaman, 'I can't say; but you had better ask himself. If he had, he won't deny it; for I'll take my Bible oath that Bill, poor fellow, never hove the hatchet in his life—and I don't believe he would do it to save his life. I could always be as sure of what he said as I am of our latitude when your honour's own hand works it out.'

'Well,' inquired the Captain, addressing the other seaman, 'what evidence have you to offer?'

'I don't know anything about evidence, your honours,' answered the seaman. 'The boatswain was lying on the deck, and poor Bill had his foot upon his breast sure enough, and was laughing in such a dismal way as made me think

that he had gone maddish through ill-usage or something. For, poor fellow, he was never easily raised, and though brave as a lion, was harmless as a lamb—all the crew will swear that of him.'

'Prisoner,' said the captain, 'I am sorry that the evidence of these witnesses, who seem as sorry for your fate as I am, but too strongly confirm at least a part of the charges against you. If you have anything to say in your defence the court is inclined to hear you.'

'I am neither insensible of, nor ungrateful for, the kindness of my commander,' answered William; 'and for the sake of her and her only, of whom the boatswain dared to speak as one dishonoured, I do not hold life without its value. But I disdain to purchase it by the humiliation of vindicating myself farther from the accusations of a wretch I despise. Let the law take its award. Death is preferable to being the servant of a slave.'

'I know not,' whispered Captain Sherbourne to his first lieutenant, 'how my lips shall pronounce sentence of death on this brave young fellow. His heroic courage and his talents compel me to revere and love him—and there is something, I know not what, in his features, haunts me as a lost remembrance.' Then turning toward the prisoner, he added—'Before the sentence of the court is passed, whatever requests you may wish to have performed, I will see them faithfully carried into effect.'

'Thanks! thanks!' replied William; 'I have but little to offer in return for your goodness; but the same spirit that made me resent the indignity of my accuser would, were my hands free, cause me to embrace your knees. I have but three requests to make. I wish my watch to be given to her who is dearest to me on earth—Mary Danvers; my quadrant and other matters to my friend Jenkins, who sails in the ship *Enterprise*, now lying in the river; and my last request is, that, with the ten guineas belonging to me, and now in possession of the parser, a stone may be placed upon my mother's grave—which Mary Danvers will point out—with these words chiselled upon it—

TO THE MEMORY
OF THE
AMIALE AND UNFORTUNATE
MATILDA STANLEY.

BY DESIRE OF HER UNFORTUNATE SON.

‘Matilda Stanley!’ exclaimed Captain Sherbourne, in a tone of agitation, ‘was that the name of your mother?’

‘It was, your honour,’ replied William, ‘and there were few such mothers.’

‘And your father!—your father!’ repeated the Captain, with increased agitation; ‘what knew you of him?’

‘Alas! nothing!’ exclaimed the prisoner, bitterly, and the tears gushed down his cheeks; but, oh, recall not to my memory in a moment like this—recall not my mother’s—No! no! my sainted mother.’

‘O conscience! conscience!’ exclaimed the Captain, and starting to his feet, and gasping in eagerness as he spoke. ‘One question more—and your mother’s father was a dissenting clergyman in the village of —— name——name the place, on that depends your life, and my happiness or misery.’

‘In the village of ——, in Westmoreland,’ replied William; ‘but he survived not his daughter’s broken heart.’

‘You knew them, then? Oh, did you know my father?’

‘My son! my son! come to a father’s heart,’ exclaimed the Captain, springing forward and falling on his neck; ‘*I am your father!* Shade of my wronged Matilda! look on this!’

‘My father!’ exclaimed William, ‘have I found him! and in such an hour? But, if you loved my mother, wherefore——’

‘Upbraid me not, my son,’ interrupted the Captain, ‘mingle not gall with my cup of joy. Your mother was my wife—my first, my only one. Circumstances forced me to exact a promise from her that our marriage should be concealed, until I dared to acknowledge it, and long captivity

severed me from her; until, on my return, I could obtain no trace of either of you. How I have mourned for her, all who now stand beside me have been the daily witnesses. My son! my son!

‘My father! O my father!’ exclaimed William; ‘but at this moment you are also my judge.’

‘No, no!’ cried the Captain. ‘Seamen, strike off the fetters from your commander’s son. Rigby, at another tribunal, I will be surety for the appearance of my son.’

The fetters were struck off from William’s hands and feet, and officers and men burst simultaneously into three times three loud, long, and hearty cheers.

The boatswain, rearing that a worse thing might come upon him, fell on his knees before the Captain, and made a full confession of his shameful intrigue with Squire Wates, and begged forgiveness. As his kidnapping of William had been the means of finding the commander his son the rascal was forgiven, but dismissed the frigate.

But I must return to poor Mary. She was sitting beside her father in the prison, when he addressed her, saying—‘Come, come, child, thou saidst thou wouldst sing and read to me, and is this thy singing—nothing but sighs and tears? I’m saying, is this thy promised singing, daughter?—but it is perhaps the fittest singing for a jail.’

‘Ah, father!’ said Mary, ‘you know I would not willingly add to your sorrows. But can you forbid me to weep for him who, from childhood, has been to me as a brother—whom I have long regarded as a husband, and who, *for my sake*, must in a few hours die as the vilest criminal.’

‘Why, I’m saying daughter,’ said old Danvers, ‘let’s have no more about it. I’m as sorry for Bill Stanley as thou canst be for thy life. But I say, girl, they can expect no better who fly in the face of a father. I am sure we have distress enough of our own, if we would only think about it, without meddling with that of other people’s. Is it not bad enough that thy father is shut up here within these iron bars, and perhaps thou and thy mother will be driven to beg upon the streets, when thou mightst have been riding in thy

carriage? I'm saying, is not this misery enough, without thy crying about what thou hast nothing to do with? Why, Mary, thou mayest be thankful thou an't his wife.' 'Father! father!' she said, wringing her hands together 'murmur not at our lot, nor upbraid me with sympathizing in misery to which yours is mercy. What are the sufferings of want compared with that I now feel? To save him I could smile and be happy, though doomed to beg and kiss the foot that spurned me from them.'

'The sheriff's officer and Mrs. Danvers at this moment entered, and the latter rushed towards her husband, exclaiming—'O husband! husband! the worst is come at last! They have seized house and all!—and, Mary, thou and I are left without a roof to cover us. Thou hast no home now, hinny! Your father is shut up in this filthy prison, and your mother never knew what misery was till now.'

'Wife, wife!' cried old Danvers, 'what dost thou say?—seized the house too!—and my wife and daughter driven to the streets! O wife!—I say I wish I had never been born! Mary! Mary, love! what wilt thou do now?'

'Do not, my dear parents,' said Mary, 'repine at the hand of Providence. He who clothes the lily and feeds the fowls of the air will not permit us to perish in the midst of Christians.'

'Daughter! daughter!' cried her mother, 'thou little knowest what a hard-hearted and wicked world we live in! Humanity and honesty and everything that is good have gone out of it. The world was not so when I knew it first.'

'Well! well!' cried old Danvers; 'if the world be as bad as you say, it is one comfort that I shall not be long in it; for I cannot live to know that my wife and child are beggars, and that I am a prisoner, starving in a jail.'

At this moment Wates entered the room, and addressing Mr. Danvers, said—'I have but this morning heard of your misfortunes, Mr. Danvers, and have not lost a moment in hastening to offer my assistance. To your daughter I now offer my hand, my fortune, and my heart; and let her but

say she will accept them and this day ends your imprisonment.'

'There, old woman!' exclaimed Mr. Danvers, in ecstasy, 'what dost thou and our daughter think of that? Did I not say that Mr. Wates meant marriage, and nothing but marriage—and was not I right? Thou shalt have her, sir, with a father's blessing, and I will pray for thee the longest day I have to live: Fall on thy knees, Mother Danvers—fall on thy knees, and thank the kind, good, generous gentleman. Daughter, why dost thou stand there and say nothing? Did I not always say thou wast born to be a lady?'

'For the sake of human nature, Mr. Wates,' said Mary, 'I will suppose that your intentions are now honourable. I will believe that you mean kindly, that you are willing to assist my parents, and rescue them from their distress. But, could I even forget the past—could I forget that for many months you have sought my destruction, and have striven to make me become that which would have made me to be despised in my own eyes, and an outcast in those of others—if, sir, I could even forget these things, I could not give my hand to one whom my heart has been accustomed to detest. For your offered kindness I would thank you with my tears, but I can only repay you with gratitude. If, however, your assistance to my parents is only to be procured through my consenting to your wishes, they must remain as they are now, until it shall please Providence to send them a more disinterested deliverer. Betwixt us there is a gulf fixed that shall ever divide us—it is death and aversion—therefore think not of me.'

'Daughter!' cried the old man wrathfully, 'hast thou taken leave of thy senses altogether?'

'Come, Mary, love,' said her mother; 'now that poor William must be no more, and that Mr. Wates means honourably, be not obstinate—do not suffer your father to die in a place like this, and your mother to beg upon the streets.'

'Mother!' cried Mary, vehemently, 'with the last of my blood will I toil for your support; but speak not of that man to me. Keep, sir, your wealth for one to whom it may

have attractions, and to whom you have never offered dishonour. I despise it, and I despise you; and this shallow and cruel artifice will avail you nothing.'

'Consent,' said Wates, 'and to-night our hands shall be united.'

'Wife! wife!' cried the old man, 'we shall humble ourselves at her feet; belike she won't see her father and mother weeping, on their knees before her, and say to them die—!' And they knelt before her.

'Rise! my parents!—rise!' she exclaimed; 'if ye would not have your daughter's blood upon your head. Monster,' she added, turning to Wates, 'can ye talk of marriage to me, when he to whom my heart and vows are given, if he be not already dead, must in a few hours die a death of shame!'

'And will you not save him?' said Wates, eagerly.

'Save him!—how? how?' she cried.

'Consent to be mine, and within an hour I shall procure his pardon,' said he.

'Villain! villain! would you deceive me with the snare of the devil?' she exclaimed.

'I swear it,' he answered.

'Save him! save him!' she exclaimed wildly; but again cried suddenly—'No, no!—wretch, you mock me!'

'Yes, he mocks you, Mary,' said Jack Jenkins, who had just entered. 'I could find in my heart to kick the old murderer through these iron gratings; for I know it is all through him that poor Bill must, before the sun goes down, lose his life.'

While Jack was speaking the locks of the prison-doors were again heard creaking, and in rushed William, his father, and the officers of the frigate, and they dragged the rascal Rigby along with them.

There was a cry of 'Mary!' 'William!' and a rush to meet each other. But the best scene was the confusion of Wates when his brother knave exposed his villany; and Captain Sherbourne ordering them to be gone, Jack Jenkins rushed after them, for the pleasure of kicking them down

the prison stairs; but Bill, catching him by the arm, said—‘Messmate, let me introduce you to *my father*.’

‘*Your father!*’ exclaimed Mary; and it would have been hard to say which of the two was nearest fainting. They left the prison together, old Danvers and all; and Mary and Bill were soon spliced. They were the happiest couple alive. He rose to be post captain; and I hope to see him an admiral. So gentlemen, that’s an end to my yarn.

‘But,’ inquired the company, ‘what became of Jack Jenkins?’ ‘Why, I am Jack Jenkins,’ answered he; ‘sail-master, with half-pay of five and sixpence a day, besides two shillings as interest for prize-money—thanks to my old friend Bill.’



THE COVENANTING FAMILY.



THIRTY years ago there dwelt an old man, named Simon Cockburn, who followed the avocations of parish teacher and precentor. Every Saturday afternoon, after he had washed his hands from the labours of the week, he went down to the public-house of the village in which he dwelt, and took his seat by the parlour window or fire (according as it was summer or winter), to read the newspaper, and see, as he said, “what country Buonaparte had conquered *this* week;” and, as Simon read of some new achievement of “the terrible Corsican,” as he called him, he was wont to lay down the newspaper, take off his spectacles, and say unto himself aloud, “But if the chield should come owre to Britain, surely he will never be guilty o’ the cruelty and folly o’ doing onything to the parish schoolmasters. He owes so much to learning himsel’, that he certainly will respect those who impart it to others.”

But if a stranger chanced to be in the room when he had

glanced over the news, and as he began to warm and wax mighty over his single pint (or mutchkin) bottle of strong ale, Simon's wonted taciturnity gave way to a flow of speech; and seldom had the conversation continued long, when he invariably inquired—"Did ever ye hear o' the saying by what law the Bishops were expelled from Scotland?"

The answer being in the negative, he continued—"Weel, it was neither by civil law nor by canon law, but by *Dunse Law!*"

"By Dunse law, old man!" inquired his auditors—"why, what law is that?"

"If ye never heard o' it," answered he, "it is worth your while going to see it. Ye may become acquainted wi' it without paying a fee to a writer. Dunse Law, sir, is a bonny round hill, which rises behind the honest town o' that name. Ye have a magnificent view upon the top o' it. In my opinion it is equal to the view from the Calton at Edinburgh; and some of my scholars that have been travellers inform me that the view from the Calton is every way equal to the far-famed view in the bay o' Naples. Ye have the whole Merse lying beneath your feet, like a beautifully laid out and glorious garden—the garden o' some mighty conqueror, that had converted a province into a pleasure ground, and walled it round wi' mountains. There ye behold the Blackadder wimpling along—the Whitadder curling round below you, and as far as ye can see, now glittering in a haugh or buried amongst wooded braes. Before ye, also, ye behold the Cheviots, and the Northumberland hills, wi' a broad country, the very sister o' the Merse, lying below them, and which runs to Tweedside, where they stand and look at each other! Down the middle distance runs the Tweed, shining out here and there, like an illuminated lake, and receiving the Border rivers o' both countries into its bosom, just as a hen gathers its young under its wings. To the right hand, also, ye behold Roxburghshire, wi' the dimness o' distance, like a thin veil thrown owre its beauty, and its hills a' before ye. Ye see also the smoke rising from towns,

villages, and hamlets, and hovering owre them in the mid-way air, like a most transparent cloud. Gentlemen's seats, and the plantations around them, lie scattered owre the scene; farmhouses that lairds might live in, and stackyards that no other country could produce: On each elbow ye have the purple Lammermuir, where a hundred hirsels graze; and to the east the mighty ocean, wi' the ships sailing upon it, where, wi' their white sails spread to the sun, they look from the distance just like sea-birds poising themselves on their outstretched wings owre the deep. Ye see also the islands that rise wondrously from its bosom—fragments which the great waters have stolen from the dry land, or the dry land from the waters. But I ought to have mentioned that, before ye, also, ye see the ruins o' castles—some o' them still majestic—which changed masters a hundred times, as victory chanced to decide for the English bow or the Scottish spear, and which yet bear manifestations o' having been places o' strength and terror. All these things, sir, and mony more, do ye see from Dunse Law—for I have described it very imperfectly; but I hope I have said enough to convince ye that it is no everyday view. And now I shall endeavour to explain to ye the meaning o' the saying that the bishops were expelled from Scotland by *Dunse Law*.

“When the first and unfortunate King Charles had the infatuation, and I may also say the cruelty, to attempt to bend and twist the consciences o' our forefathers, just as if they had been willows in the hands o' a basket maker, to make them swallow the service-book, and to clothe and feed bishops and bow their heads to them—they, like men who regarded liberty o' conscience, the freedom of their country, and, above all, the right o' worshipping their Maker as He had commanded them in His word, to be dearer than life—when the king caused his troopers to ride rough-shod out owre Scotland, and to awe them into obedience with the naked sword—they also laid their hands upon their swords, ready to resist; and flying to the hills, they congregated together a mighty army.

“The watchword o’ the heroic army was—‘*For Christ’s Crown and the Covenant*;’ and having congregated together to the number o’ many thousands, they, in accordance with the wish of the Tables and chief men, were placed under the command of the famous General Leslie. When, therefore, the king heard of these things, he set out from London towards Scotland, at the head of his gay cavaliers and valorous men of war, doubting not but that, at the glance of his royal eyes, the rebellious Scottish peasants would be stricken with awe and reverence, lay down their arms, and bend their necks before him. Now, General Leslie was an old man, and a little man; but he had a wise head, and, like Buonaparte, he had a mighty spirit in his wee breast; and when he heard that the king was on his way to Scotland, at the head o’ a regular army, he resolved to meet him face to face; and for that purpose the army o’ the Covenant marched forward to Dunglass.

“But when Charles learned from his spies accounts of the numbers, the discipline, and enthusiasm of the Covenanters, his heart failed him; and when he looked on his own army, and perceived that they neither had zeal in his cause, nor discipline, nor numbers, to enable them to contend against the army that he was leading them to oppose, he lowered his tone marvellously. He found that the divine prerogative which surrounds kings is but a broken hedge owre which every outlaw may trample, where the hearts and affections o’ the people dinna form an outer bulwark around it. And though a few days before he had denounced all the inhabitants of Scotland as traitors, and threatened, in the arrogance and confidence o’ his heart, to deal with them as such, and had even given orders to his generals to wreak their vengeance on the rebels—he was now glad to send Lord Holland, with a trumpeter, to the camp of the Covenanters at Dunglass, to proclaim to them that he was willing to grant them all their demands, and that their country should be free, provided that they would profess their allegiance to him, and not approach within ten miles o’ the Border.

“Now, sir, the Covenanters were by no means Republi-

cans in their principles: all they wanted was freedom—freedom o' mind and body; the right of worshipping in the manner most agreeable to their conscience, and o' not being compelled to unbutton their pockets to pay for objects of which they disapproved. They had a sort o' liking for Charlie. His faither was a Scotchman, and had been born among them; and they were anxious to like him, if he would only put it in their power to do it. They were loth to draw the sword against him; and, when they did do it, it was for conscience sake. They therefore accepted his condition readily; for he promised fairly, and as much, if not more, than they expected to wring from him by the slaughter o' his troops, and steeping the land wi' the blood o' its inhabitants.

“When Charles, therefore, heard o' the readiness with which they had agreed to his proposal, in the vanity and delusion o' his spirit, he attributed it to his great power and glory as a king; and he repented that he had not offered to them more haughty and less righteous terms. But those that he had proposed to them he had no design to keep.

“He, therefore, marched forward his army, and encamped on the south bank o' the Tweed, above Berwick, at a place which historians call the Birks—which I take to be the fields lying between West Ord and Norham Castle. Here he soon gave proofs that, having come from the Thames to the Tweed, it was his resolution not to return, until he had wreaked his vengeance on the people of Scotland, whom he regarded as rebels.

“When, therefore, General Leslie heard of the king's doings, he gave orders to his army to march towards Dunse.

“But, before proceeding farther, I must make mention of a Covenanting family who are to be more particularly the objects of my present discourse. At that time there resided in the Castle Wynd in Dunse a singular and godly woman—an Alice Cockburn (or, as some called her, Weatherburn, that being her maiden name). She was the wife o' a devout and worthy man, one Alexander Cockburn, who was the pro-

prietor of a croft in the neighbourhood; and they had five sons, all men grown. Their names were John, James, Andrew, William; and the youngest, who was nineteen, was called Alexander, after his faither. I hae mentioned Alice first, not only because her name will be hereafter mentioned in this narrative, but also because, while we often speak in triumph o' what our faithers did in securing our civil and religious liberty, we forget to do justice to our mothers, who were even more enthusiastic in the great and glorious cause than our faithers were. They fired their zeal—they first lifted up a voice against tyranny—and while our faithers fought in the field, they bound up their bleeding wounds, brought water from the brooks to cool their parched lips, and were purveyors to the army—supplying them with clothing and with food.

“It was on the evening of the 5th of June, 1639, that Alice Cockburn hastened into her house, exclaiming: ‘Rise, husband! rise, sons! arm yoursels, and let us awa to Dunse Law; for there is a sicht to be seen there the nicht, such as never before was witnessed in a’ broad Scotland, nor yet in a’ Christendie. Haste ye! gird your swords upon your thighs, and away to assist the armies o’ the kirk and our country, to do battle against the Philistines.’

“‘Tell us what ye mean, Alice,’ said her husband. ‘The king an’ his cavaliers are still near Berwick; I hae heard naething o’ our people havin’ left Dunglass, and there can be nae battle on Dunse Law the nicht—therefore, what is it ye allude to?’

“‘The king may be whar ye say,’ replied she; ‘but General Leslie and our men are encamping upon the Law; and they are a host whose numbers seem countless as the sand upon the sea-shore. Our oppressors will be consumed as stubble before them, and tyrants will become their captives. Haste ye, sons, arm yoursels to be ready for the fight that is to fight. Enrol yersels in the army o’ the righteous, for the sake o’ the truth, for the sake o’ conscience and yer country. And, on my death-bed, if I be deprived o’ every other consolation, I will still be borne up by the secret joy

that my five sons, and my half-marrow, drew their swords, and fought, side by side, for the cause o' the Covenant.'

"'Alice,' said her husband, 'sae lang as I hae ye to stir me up, and mak me mair fervent in the great cause, which it is our duty to support with our whole might and our whole strength, ye shall never hear it said that Sandy Cockburn shunned the brunt o' danger, or that his sword returned empty when he met wi' an oppressor weapon to weapon. My richt hand is aulder and stiffer than it has been; but when ance suppld it has lost but little o' its strength, and I think I can answer for our sons.'

"'Ye may do that safely,' said John, their eldest; 'there shall nae want o' daring be fixed to the name o' Cockburn.'

"His three younger brothers, James, Andrew, and William, agreed with him, and spoke in the same manner; but Alexander, the youngest, and the faither's namesake, though generally esteemed the boldest amongst them, hastened not to provide himself with arms, as his brothers did, but he sat with his arms folded upon his bosom, and was silent.

"'Alexander,' said his mother, 'wherefore do ye sit wi' yer arms faulded, an' look like ane that wishes to conceal the word *coward* written on his breast?'

"'Nae man, no even my brothers, durst ca' me a coward, mother,' said he; 'but I canna help thinkin' that this is an unnatural war, in which friends and kindred will plunge their swords into each other. And there are some who would be fighting against us, whose swords I would rather feel pierced through my body than raise mine against them.'

"'O waes me!' she cried; 'am I to be disgraced—is the Truth to be deserted by my youngest and dearest—the Benjamin o' my age? Where, laddie, where are a' the precepts I endeavoured to inculcate into you now? But I see hoo it is; it a' arises oot o' yer fondness for the dauchter o' that enemy o' oor cause—Robert Stuart! Is there naebody ye can see to like but her? Her faither is a spy and a persecutor, a defender o' the supremacy o' hishops, an advocate o' the service-book, and an upholder o' the absolute power o' the king. She is o' the same spirit and principles as her

faither is; and in that respect she is more to be commended than ye are, for she has hearkened to the voice of her parents, and has not the sin o' disobedience on her head. Have ye forgot the command, 'Be not ye unequally yoked?' Rise, Alexander, I command ye, get ready yer arms, and gae wi' yer faither, yer brother, and yer mother, to the camp.'

'Na, na, guid wife,' said her husband, 'that mauna be; for liberty o' conscience am I buckling on my sword, and I wunna see the conscience o' my ain bairn suffer wrang. If Alexander winna gang wi' us, a' that I ask of him is that he winna draw his sword against the cause in defence o' which his faither and his brothers go forth, ready to lay down their lives, if they be required.'

'Faither!' cried Alexander, springing up and grasping his hand, 'I will never fight against ye! never! I stand by your side to the last, or die by it, and my arm shall be ready to defend ye! Where you go, I will go!'

'That is right, Alexander, my man,' said his eldest brother; 'I kenned there was mettle in the callant, and principle too—though I must say that he is rather unpleasantly situated, and I canna say that I would like his case to be my ain.'

His arms being sought out also, the father and his sons were accoutered, and ready to depart, when Alice again said: 'We have not yet prepared all that we ought to do. We are but stewards o' the inheritance intrusted to our hands in this world; and to the sacred cause in which ye are about to engage it is our duty also to contribute liberally from the substance with which we have been blessed. Now, what say ye, guidman, do ye think that ye could afford to take to the camp, an' present before the general six sheep, six firlots o' wheat, and six measures o' meal? Hae ye faith to venture sae far?'

'Alice,' replied he, 'can ye doubt me? If it were necessary, I would consider it my duty not only to part my stock to the last sheep, and wi' my corn to the last firlot—but I would sell the craft also, and part wi' the money, rather than

see one who has drawn his sword in defence o' the Covenant and his country want.'

'Ye mak my heart glad,' answered Alice; 'and now let us kneel and give thanks that we have lived to see the day when the armies o' the kirk are gathered together, powerful as those which David led against the Philistines.'

And Alexander Cockburn and his family raised the voice of thanksgiving, after which they knelt down together, and he prayed aloud. When they arose, each man girded his sword upon his thigh, and the father commanded that a horse should be harnessed, which was laden with the wheat and the meal for the army of the Covenant. The sheep they drove on before them, and Alice accompanied her husband and her sons.

I must now, however, take notice of Mr. Stuart, of whom particular mention was made by Alice, as being an enemy to the Covenant, and a persecutor of its adherents. He was a man of considerable substance, and lived about midway between Dunse and Polwarth. His daughter, to whom young Alexander Cockburn was attached, and who his mother cast up to him, was called Flora. She was at that period a bonny young creature o' eighteen; her hair was like the yellow gowd when the sun shines on't, and her een were a brighter and a safter blue than the sky on a summer morning, when there isna a cloud in a' the heavens. She was tall and gentle-looking, and her waist ye might hae spanned wi' your hand. It was wrangling her to ca' her a persecutor; for, though she was an advocate for Episcopacy, as her faither had taught her to be, there wasna a sentiment in her heart that could hae wranged a worm.

Young Alexander and Flora had become very early acquainted wi' each other, and as early intimate. They were yet but bairns in a manner; but, young as they were, they had a happy *langsyne*, on which they could look back, in which they had

———'paidled in the burn,
And pu'd the gowans fine.'

They had been playmates from the time that they could

toddle hand in hand thegither; and the hands that they had joined to help each other to run when but infants they now wished to join for good and a', that they might journey pleasantly together through life. Their hearts had become insensibly twisted round each other, and they had been so long entwined that they had become as one.

But I must now inform you of the arrival of Alice, her husband and her sons, at Dunse Law. When they arrived at the camp, Alexander, the elder, inquired of one who seemed, by the orders which he was giving, to be an officer or a man in authority, if he could see the general; for the officers in the army of the Covenant wore the plain blue bonnet, and the blue ribbon streaming from it, without any distinction from the men in the ranks; and when the men lay upon the bare ground, so did they.

'Ye seem to come wi' a free-will offering,' said the officer; 'and not only wi' an offering o' provision, but, judging by your soldierly array, ye come to fight the battles o' conscience, the Covenant, and our country.'

'We do,' said the father; 'my five sons and myself, an' these sheep and provisions are the offerings o' my children's mother; which, my lord, or whatever ye may be, wi' her husband and five sons thravn into the scale, makes nae sma' sacrifice.'

'Ye speak truly, worthy friend,' said the officer; 'we rejoice in such devotedness towards our glorious purpose. It is a volunteer cause, and Heaven affords us assurance of victory. Yonder, see ye, is the general riding round the tents on the black horse; go to him before he take up his quarters in the castle for the night—he will give ye a gracious welcome.'

'Weel, that is very odd,' said the senior Alexander Cockburn, gazing upon the general with a look of surprise. 'He is a wee, auld-looking body. My opinion o' him was, that he would be something like what we understand Sir William Wallace to have been—a man before whom his enemies fled at the shaking o' his spear.'

'O Alexander!' said Alice, 'hae ye forget yoursel' a' the-

gither, or, rather, hae ye forgot your Bible? Do ye no remember the purposes for which the weak things o' this earth were chosen?'

'True, Alice,' said he; 'I stand corrected.' And the father, the mother, their armed sons, and the sheep and provisions which they brought with them were placed before General Leslie.

'Well, good folk,' inquired the general, 'what would ye wi' me?'

'We come, sir,' said the elder Cockburn, lifting his bonnet, 'to offer you our best services o' heart and hand, and to—to——'

Here old Alexander, who, though one o' the most rigid and unbending men o' the Covenant, was withal a man o' singular modesty, and, in some respects, o' bashfulness, began to falter, on which Alice, taking upon herself the office o' speaker, began to say, 'Yes, your excellency—that is, your generalship—we are come——'

But her husband gently pulled her by the sleeve, whispering—'Haud sae, Alice, just let me gang on; ye ken it behoves a woman to be silent, an in an' assembly to open not her mouth.'

Though an obedient and an affectionate wife, this was a point which she probably would have been disposed to argue with him; but the general interfering said: 'Wi' your good leave, sir, I shall hear your wife. Scotland owes a debt to its wives and mothers, which, as a nation, they should be proud to acknowledge; they are manifesting a godly enthusiasm, which is far, far beyond the boasted virtue o' the mothers and maidens o' Rome, when they saved their city from destruction. Speak on, good woman.'

"Alice, thus emboldened, proceeded, "Weel, sir, as my husband has said, he and our sons have come to offer you their best services o' heart and hand; and o' the little we can spare we hae brought ye six sheep, six firlots o' wheat, and six measures o' meal. The latter is but a poor offering; but when as a wife I present to ye my husband, and as a mother, my five sons, I trust that what we bring will not be

altogether unacceptable; while it shall be my care to provide means at least for their support; so that, if they be not of assistance to ye, they at least shall not be a burden.'

"The old general dismounted, and took Alice by the hand. 'While Scotland can boast o' such wives and mothers as you,' said he—'and I am proud to say there are many such—the enemies o' the Covenant will never be able to prevail against us.'

"Alexander Cockburn and his five sons then began to erect a sort o' half hut, half tent, beside those o' the rest o' the army, that they might be always in readiness. And oh, sir, at that period Dunse Law presented one of the grandest sights that ever the eyes o' man were witness to. On the side o' that hill were encamped four-and-twenty thousand men. Lowest down, lay the tents o' the nobles and the great officers, their tops rising like pyramids; before them were placed forty pieces o' cannon; and between them were the tents o' their captains; and from every captain's tent streamed a broad blue flag, on which was inscribed the words I have already quoted—'FOR CHRIST'S CROWN AND THE COVENANT.' Higher up the hill were the straw-covered and turf-built huts o' the soldiers; and from the rising o' the sun until its going down ye wouldna hae heard an oath or a profane expression amongst those four-and-twenty thousand men; but, on the contrary, hundreds o' the ministers o' the gospel were there, each man with his Bible in his hand and his sword girt upon his thigh, ready to lead his followers to the battle, or to lay down his life in testimony o' the truth o' the doctrines which he preached. Morning and night there was public worship throughout the camp, and the drum summoned the army to prayers and to hearing the word, while the services were attended by all, from the general down to the humblest recruit that had just entered the ranks. At every hour in the day also, from some part o' the camp or other, the sounds o' praise and prayer were heard. Every man in that army was an enthusiast; but he had a glorious cause to excite his enthusiasm—the cause o' his Creator and his country's liberty; ay, and the liberty, the rights, and

privileges of posterity also. Yes, sir, I say o' posterity, for it is to those men that we are indebted for the blessings and the freedom which we enjoy beyond the people o' other countries: though there are men who dared to call them *mere fanatics*! Fanatics, indeed! but oh, they are fanatics that saved their country; that braved oppression; that defied it even to death, and that wi' their own blood wrote the irrevocable charter o' our liberty! If they were fanatics, they were such as every nation in the world would be proud to call its sons, and would glory to have possessed. They are fanatics, if they must be called so, whose deeds, whose characters, whose firmness o' purpose, the integrity o' whose principles, and whose matchless courage, with the sublime height to which they carried their devotion, despising imprisonment, pain, and death, render us unworthy o' being numbered as their descendants. I canna endure to hear the men, whose graves are the foundations on which are built our civil and religious liberties, so spoken o'; I winna see their graves—I winna hear their memories profaned. More fit we were to set up a national monument in remembrance o' them.

“ On the day after the army o' the Covenant encamped on Dunse Law the king held a grand review o' his army by Tweedside; but just as the review was over, and when the king and his courtiers were retiring to sit down to their wine, and the feast o' fat things, and his poor, half-hungred soldiers to kitchen on a broken biscuit, or a piece o' bare bannock (while the Covenanters were living like gentlemen on wheaten bread and flesh-meat every day), some o' the loyalists that had clearer een than others, observed the great camp upon Dunse Law, and the hundred banners waving in the wind, and ran to communicate what they had observed to the king. Charles, to do him justice, was a canny, silly sort o' a body, but just infatuated wi' his ideas about his prerogative—by which he meant absolute power—and his foolish desire to force everybody to swallow a bishop, gown, sleeves and all! However, when he heard that the 'blue bonnets were bound for the Border' he spoke angrily and

disdainfully to his officers, and upbraided them that they had not brought him tidings o' the movements o' his enemies; and, calling for his prospect-glass, he stood upon the bank o' the river—and there, sure enough, to his sorrow and consternation, he beheld the camp, and the multitude o' armed men. He even to a nearness counted their numbers. Now Dunse, as the crow flies, not being quite seven miles to where the Tweed forms the Border line between Ladykirk and Norham, his Majesty spoke o' punishing the Covenanters for having broken the compact that they had entered into not to approach within ten miles—forgetting, be it remembered, that he was the first aggressor in having sent his troops to attack a party o' the Covenanters at Kelso: and forgetting, also, that his army was unable to stand up, even for a single hour, against the host who stood over against them. He soon, however, became sensible o' his weakness, and he began again to offer liberal and generous terms to his armed subjects; but no sooner did he find them ready to accept them, than his kingly word became like a whuff o' reek that has vanished out o' sight in the air; ye may seek it, but where will ye find it? The Covenanters were not willing to bathe their swords in the blood o' their fellow-subjects, and the king was feared to measure the strength o' his army against the blue-bonneted host.

“But it is not my intention to narrate to ye a history o' the wars o' the Covenant; I shall only say that the king, seeing he had no chance if it came to a battle, consented to summon a parliament, and that everything should be settled as the Covenanters desired. Both armies were accordingly disbanded, and Alexander Cockburn and his five sons returned home to their own house, and laid their weapons aside.

“The old man said that ‘he trusted the time had come when in this country the sword should be turned into a plough-share and the spear into a pruning-hook.’

“But Alice answered him, saying, ‘O Alexander! a foolish thing has been done by our rulers. They have got an assurance from the king; but they ought to have made assurance double sure. Ye have read, and they must have

read, 'Put not your trust in princes.' The day is not distant when they will rue that they overlooked that text.'

"There was too much in the nature o' prophecy in the words which Alice spoke, for twelve months had not passed when the mischief-making little Churchman, Bishop Laud, and other evil spirits o' a similar stamp, egged up the simple king to break a' the promises he had made to the people o' Scotland, and wi' a strong hand to carry war and revenge into the country. But, poor man, he reckoned without his host. His advisers were like the counsellors o' Solomon's son—they advised him to his ruin. The news o' his intention ran through Scotland like wildfire. Beacons burned on the mountains, men gathered on the plains, and before the king was in readiness to leave London all Scotland was in arms. Old Leslie was once more chosen commander-in-chief; and the same valiant men that the year before had encamped upon Dunse Law, gathered together, and marched towards the Borders.

"They had reached Chouseley, which is between three and four miles west of Dunse, when Alexander Cockburn and his sons again joined them, and brought with them an offering of provisions, as before. The general again remembered and welcomed them; and he recollected them the more readily because Alice accompanied them. On the following morning, when the army began to march towards the south, she took her leave of them, saying: 'Fareweel, husband! bairns! to the protection o' Him whose battles ye go forth to fight I resign ye. Pray ye, that whate'er betide, I may be strengthened to bow my head, and say, '*His will be done.*' Go then, acquit yourselves valiantly; think on the sacred cause in which ye are engaged, and trust in the Hand that will sustain ye! Bairns, fareweel! your mother blesses you! she will pray for you. Husband, fareweel! look after our bairns. Alexander! ye are the youngling o' my flock; and, oh, hinny, my heart yearns for ye, lest ye permit unworthy thoughts to arise in yer breast, that may deprive yer young arm o' its strength.'

“ ‘Fear not for me, mother,’ replied the youth.

“She, therefore, returned home; and they proceeded wi’ the army towards Coldstream, from whence they crossed the Tweed, and proceeded, by way o’ Wooler and Longframlington, towards Newcastle, of which town they came within sight on the tenth day after entering Northumberland; but, finding Newcastle strongly fortified and garrisoned by the king’s troops, under General Conway, they proceeded a few miles up the Tyne to Newburn, where the civil war in reality began, and the first battle was fought.

“When the king’s troopers heard that the Covenanters were encamped at Newburn they galloped out o’ Newcastle, sword in hand; each man swearing lustily that he would kill a dozen o’ the blue-bonneted Jockies—as they called the Covenanters in derision—and boasting that they would make prisoners o’ all who had escaped the sword. But when the inhabitants o’ the canny toon heard the braggadocio o’ the red-coats, as they galloped through the streets, flourishing their swords—‘Dinna brag tow fast, lads,’ said they, shaking their heads: ‘words arena deeds; and tak care that each ane o’ ye doesna catch a Tartar.’

“Next morning the battle o’ Newburn was fought; and the tone o’ the king’s soldiers was indeed lowered. They were routed at every point, they ran to and fro in confusion, and their panic was like a whirlwind in a barn-yard. ‘The road to Durham!—show us, show us the road to Durham!’ they cried; and, helter skelter, neck or nought, leaving swords, pistols, carbines, muskets, everything they could throw away, by the roadside, away to Durham, and far beyond it, they ran.

“Only five o’ the army o’ the Covenant were left dead on the field; but amongst those five was old Alexander Cockburn, the husband of Alice. After the battle his sons found his mangled and lifeless body in a narrow lane, between two gardens, surrounded by a heap of dead Loyalists, who had sunk beneath his sword before he fell.

“It is said that the first blow is half the battle; and it was so wi’ the Covenanters upon this occasion; their sudden

victory at Newburn not only struck dismay into the hearts o' the royal troops, but reason and fear baith began to whisper their warnings in the ears o' the monarch. He once more became a negotiator and seeker for peace with his thrice-cheated and injured subjects. They remembered the divine precept to forgive their brother though he offended against them seven times in a day, and they kept this commandment before their eyes in all their dealings with the king. They forgave him his lack o' faith and the hollowness o' his promises; and extending to him the right hand o' allegiance, he once more gave his kingly pledge to grant them all that they desired, and to ratify it by the acts o' a Parliament. Puir man! he had long been baith king and Parliament in his ain person; and he conceived that in him dwelt absolute power and absolute wisdom; but little did he dree what a dear Parliament the ane that he then spoke o' was to be to him. It is distinguished by the emphatic appellation o' 'THE PARLIAMENT' even unto this day; and by that designation it will continue to be known. Thus the arms and the cause o' the Covenant again triumphed; and, the objects for which the army took the field being accomplished, they were dismissed, and returned every man to his own house.

"With afflicted hearts—while they rejoiced at the accomplishment o' the object for which they had taken up arms—the five sons o' Alice Cockburn returned to Dunse. She was yet ignorant o' her husband's death; and having been informed o' their approach, she met them at the door. She stretched out her arms to welcome them; but they fell, as if suddenly stricken wi' palsy, by her side; and wi' a trembling voice, and a look that bespoke her forebodings, she inquired, 'Where is *he*?'"

"They looked sadly one towards another, as if each were anxious that the other should communicate the tidings. Her eldest son took her hand, and said mournfully, 'Come into the house, mother.'

"Their sorrowfu' looks, their dejected manner, told her but too plainly her husband's fate.

“‘He is dead!’ she cried, in a tone o’ heart-piercing solitariness and sorrow, as she accompanied them into the house, where she had beheld them equip themselves for the battle.

“‘My faither is dead,’ said Alexander, her youngest; ‘but he died bravely, mother, in the cause in which we glory, and in which a’ Scotland glories; and, to the deeds done by his hand on the day he fell, we, in a great measure, owe the freedom o’ our country, and the security o’ the Covenant.’

“She clasped her hands together, and sat down and wept.

“‘Mother,’ said her sons, gathering round her, ‘dinna mourn.’

“She rose, she wept upon their necks, from the eldest to the youngest—‘Ye hae lost a faither,’ said she, ‘whose loss to ye nane but thae wha kened him at his ain fireside can estimate; and I hae lost a husband, who, for eight-and-thirty years, has been dearer to me than the licht o’ the sun; for, wherever he was, there was aye sunlicht upon my heart. But his life has been laid down in a cause worthy o’ the first martyrs. I hae endeavoured to pray, ‘THY will be done;’ and pray for me, bairns, that I may submit to that will without repining, for the stroke is heavy, and nature weak.’

“Again she sat down and wept, and now she lifted her hands in prayer, and again she wrung them in the bereavement o’ widowhood, saying—‘O my Alexander! my husband! shall I never, never see ye again?’ And her sons gathered round her, to comfort her.

“On the day following, Alexander, the youngest o’ the sons o’ Alice, went towards Polwarth in the hope of obtaining an interview with Flora Stuart, whom he had not seen for several months; for, from the time that he had joined the Covenanting army on Dunse Law, her father had forbidden him his house. He spoke of him as the young traitor, and forbade Flora at her peril to speak to him again. But, as the sang says—

‘Love will venture in where it daurna weel be seen,’

and Alexander again ventured to see her whose image was

for ever present wi' his thoughts, as if her portrait were engraven on his heart. It was about the back end o' harvest, and the full moon was shining bright upon the stubble fields and the brown hills; he was passing by Chouseley (or, as some call it, Choicelee), the very place where his faither, his brothers and himself, had last joined the army o' the Covenant, when he observed a figure tripping along the road before him. One glance was sufficient. He knew it was she whom he sought—his own Flora. He ran forward.

“‘Flora!’ he cried; ‘stop, dear—stop—it is me!’

“She turned round and said—‘Sir!’

“The cold abruptness of the word, ‘Sir!’ was like a dagger driven through his bosom; and, for a moment, he stood before her in silence and confusion, as one who has been detected of some offence. But true affection is never long either in finding words, or an equivalent for them.

“‘Flora,’ said he, holding out his hand, ‘it is long since we met; I hae suffered affliction since then, and encountered danger, and considering the long, long friendship—the more than friendship, Flora—that has been between us, and the vows we have exchanged wi’ each other, I think I micht have expected something mair frae ye now than—‘Sir!’ Is your heart changed, Flora—hae ye forgot me—or do ye wish to forget me?’

“‘No, Alexander,’ said she, ‘I have not forgotten ye; nor hae I forgotten the vows that have passed between us, as my unhappy heart is a secret witness; and if I did wish to forget ye, it wouldna be possible. For, wherever I micht be, the remembrance o’ you would come o’er my thoughts like the shadow o’ a cloud passing across a river.’

“‘And after it had passed would it leave as little impression upon your heart, Flora, as the shadow o’ a cloud does upon a river?’

“‘Alexander,’ she replied, ‘I am not gaun to argue wi’ ye, for I canna. But oh, man, ye hae drawn your sword against your king—ye hae fought against him, ye hae been a traitor in the land that gave ye birth; and, as my faither says, they

who are rebellious subjects will never mak good husbands, or be regulated by the ties o' domestic life.'

"'Flora,' returned he, 'I deny altogether that what your faither says is correct. But, even allowing that it were, I deny that I hae taken up arms against my king, or that I am a rebellious subject. We took up arms against injustice, tyranny, and oppression; and the king had previously taken up arms against us. Look at the whole conduct o' the Covenant army, hae they not always listened to every proposal o' the king and trusted to his royal word as faithful subjects who were wishful to prove their attachment to his throne and person? But where can ye point out the instance that he has not fled from his engagement and deceived us, and showed us that his promises and his pledges were not stronger than burned straw? Even the last engagement which he has made, and by which he is to secure to us the rights we have sought for, prayed for, fought for, I believe he will break—he will try to evade it, and give us vengeance in its stead; and if he does so, I am no longer his subject, but his enemy, even though it be at the sacrifice o' you, Flora, and rather than part wi' you were it in my power, I would ten thousand times lay down my own life.'

"'Alexander,' added she, 'I haena forgotten the days when we were happy thegither, and when we neither thought o' kings nor o' onything else but our twa sels. But now my faither forbids me to speak to ye; and I maun obey him. And though I think that, in the principles ye are following, ye are wrong, very wrong—yet Alexander, be ye rebel, be ye what ye will, there shall never be another name but yours dear to my heart, though we ne'er meet again.'

"'Dinna meet again, dearest!' cried he; 'we will meet! we shall meet! we shall be happy too! Never talk o' no meeting again.' And they clung aroind each other's necks and wept

"They wandered lang backward and forward, forgetting how the hours flew during their long fond whispers; and Flora's father, attended by a servant man, cam forth to seek her. He vehemently upbraided and threatened his daugh-

ter, and he as vehemently reviled Alexander. He called him by names that I couldna mention, and that he bore patiently; but he also spoke disrespectfully o' his mother—he heaped insults on the memory o' his dead father. Alexander could endure no more; he sprang forward, he grasped him by the throat. He placed his hand upon his sword, which he still wore, and exclaimed: 'Sir! there is a point to all endurance, and you have passed it!' ²²

"Flora rushed forward, she placed her hand on Alexander's arm—'Forbear! what would you do?' she cried; 'it is my father!'

"'Nothing!' he replied, calmly, yet sternly; 'I would do nothing; I have borne much provocation, and acted rashly; for which rashness, forgie me, Flora. When I drew my sword to resist oppression I vowed that, should I meet one that was dear to you in the ranks o' the oppressor, though his sword should pierce my body, mine should not be raised against him. Fareweel, dearest, happier days may come.'

"Four years had not passed when the Covenanters found that they had but small cause to be satisfied wi' the promises and assurances o' the king. Provoked by his exactions, and his attempts at despotism, the people o' England had taken up arms against him. Montrose, who had been one o' the leaders o' the Covenant party, though a man possessed o' wonderful military talents, was to the full as ambitious as he was clever; and he hadna principle enough to withstand royal promises, smiles, and flattery; he therefore turned traitor to the cause in which he had at first embarked, and he turned the arms o' his Highlanders, and a body o' fierce Irishmen, against the men whom, three years before, he had led to battle. Again, many o' the Covenanters rushed to arms, and amongst them the sons o' Alice Cockburn.'

"They served as musketeers under Sir James Scott, and fought side by side at the battle o' Tippermuir. When, through the treachery o' some, and the want o' management in others, the Covenanters were put to flight, the little band o' musketeers, seeking refuge in some ruined buildings, kept

up an incessant fire upon the forces o' Montrose, as if resolved to sell their lives at the dearest price. Montrose, after many efforts, finding that they would not surrender, put himself at the head o' a powerful body o' Atholmen, and rushed upon the gallant band, who defended themselves like lions at bay. O' the five brothers who fought side by side four fell, and the youngest only was left, like the servant o' Job of old, to tell the tidings. When Alexander beheld the dead bodies o' his brothers lying around him, sorrow and revenge raged in his breast together. His fury became as the fury o' a tiger that is robbed o' its young. He dashed into the midst o' his enemies—he pressed forward to where Montrose was, crying, 'Vengeance! vengeance!' he reached him—they engaged hand to hand. Montrose was pressed against a wall o' the ruins.

"'Fause traitor! renegade!' exclaimed Alexander, 'here shall I die; the avenger o' my country and my brothers' blood!'

"His sword was uplifted to strike, when a body o' Atholmen, rushing to the rescue of their commander, the sword was shivered in Alexander's hand, and he was made prisoner.

"Several who had heard the words which he had applied to their leader, and had seen his hand raised against his life, insisted that his punishment should be death; and, in justification o' their demand, they urged the threat o' the Covenanters to do the same by whosoever Montrose might send to treat wi' them.

"A sort o' court-martial was accordingly held; and the fettered prisoner was brought forth before a tribunal who had already agreed upon his sentence. He, however, looked his judges boldly in the face. His cheeks were not blanched, nor did his lips move with fear; he heard the charges read against him—the epithets that had been applied to Montrose, who was the king's representative—and that he had raised his sword against his life. He daringly admitted his having applied the epithets—he repeated them again; and, raising his clenched and fettered hands in the face o' his judges, he justified what he had said; and he regretted that

his sword had been broken in his hand before it had accomplished the deed which he desired.

"Montrose drew his brows together, and glanced upon him sternly; but the young prisoner met his gaze with a look of scorn.

"'Away with him!' said his judges; 'to-morrow let him be brought forth for execution. His fate shall be an example to all rebels.'

"During the night which he had heard to be pronounced the last o' his existence, and throughout which he heard the heavy tramp o' the sentinel pacing before the place o' his confinement, he mourned not for his own fate; but the tears ran down his cheeks when he thought o' his poor widowed, desolate, and unfriended mother!

"'Oh, who,' he exclaimed, 'who will tell her that her bairns are wi' the dead! that there is not one left, from the eldest to the youngest! but that her husband and her sons are gone! a' gone? My mother! my poor mother!' Then he would pause, strike his hand upon his bosom, lean his brow against the wall o' the apartment, and raising it again, say—'And Flora, too, my ain betrothed!—who will tell, who will comfort her? Her faither may bear the tidings to her, but there will be nae sympathy for me in his words, nae compassion for her sorrow. Oh, could I only have seen her before I died—had there been ony ane by whom I could hae sent her some token o' my remembrance in death, I would hae bared my breast to the muskets that are to destroy me without regret. But to die in the manner I am to do, and not three-and-twenty yet! Oh, what will my poor Flora say?'

"Then folding his arms in wretchedness, he threw himself upon the straw which had been spread as a bed for his last night's repose.

"Early on the following day he was brought forth for execution. Hundreds o' armed men attended as spectators o' the scene; and, as he was passing through the midst o' them, he started as he approached one o' them; who stood near to Montrose, and he exclaimed, 'Mr. Stuart!'

"He stood still for a few moments, and approaching the person whose appearance had startled him—'Mr. Stuart,' he added, 'ye hae long regarded me as an enemy, and as a destroyer o' your peace; but, as one the very minutes o' whose existence are numbered—and as one for whom ye once professed to hae a regard—I would make one sma' request to ye—a dying request—and that is, that ye would take this watch, which is all I hae to leave, and present it to your daughter, my ain betrothed Flora, as the last bequest and token o' remembrance o' him to whom her first, her only vow was plighted.'

"It was indeed the father o' Flora he addressed, whose loyalty had induced him to take up arms with Montrose; but he turned away his head, and waved back his hand, as Alexander addressed him, as though he knew him not.

"Montrose heard the words which the prisoner had spoken, and, approaching Mr. Stuart, he said, 'Sir, our young prisoner seems to know ye—yea, by his words, it seems that ye were likely to be more than friends. Fear not to countenance him; if ye can urge aught in his favour—yea, for the services ye have rendered, if ye desire that he should be pardoned; speak but the word, and he shall be pardoned. Montrose has said it.'

"'My lord, said Stuart, 'I will not stand in the way o' justice—I would not to save a brother! I have nothing to say for the young man.'

"And as he turned away he muttered, loud enough to be hear, 'Let him meet his appointed doom, and ye will extinguish the last o' a race o' incorrigible rebels.'

"'Youth,' said Montrose, addressing Alexander, 'from the manner in which ye addressed Mr. Stuart, and the way in which he has answered my inquiries respecting ye, it is evident to me that the turbulent spirit o' the times has begotten a feeling between ye which ought not to exist; and through your quarrel the heart o' a gentle maiden may be broken. But I shall have no part in it. I think,' he added in a lower tone, 'I have seen your face before. When the lot fell upon me to be the first to cross the Tweed at Hirsel-

haugh into England, are ye not the stripling that was the first to follow me?'

"'I am,' replied Alexander; 'but what signifies that, my lord—ye have since crossed the water in an opposite direction!'

"Montrose frowned for a moment; but his better nature forced him to admire the heroism of the prisoner; and he added, 'Consent to leave the rebellious cause into which you have plunged—embrace the service of your king, and you are pardoned—you shall be promoted—the hand of the maiden whom you love shall be yours! I will be surety for what I have said.'

"Alexander remained silent for a few minutes, as though there were a struggle in his bosom what he should say; at length, turning his eyes towards Montrose, he answered—

"'What, my lord! turn renegade; like you desert the cause for which my father and my brethren have laid down their lives! Wi' all the offers which ye hold out—and tempting one o' them is—I scorn life at such a price. Let them lead me to execution; and I have but one request to make to ye. Ye have heard the favour which I besought o' that man and which he refused to grant'—as he spoke, he pointed to the father of Flora—'ye will inform his daughter that Alexander Cockburn met death as became a man—that his last thoughts were o' her—that his last breath breathed her name!'

"'You shall not die!' exclaimed Montrose, impatiently; 'I will not so far gratify your pride. Conduct him to Perth,' added he, addressing those who guarded the prisoner; 'and let him be held in safe keeping till our further pleasure is known concerning him.'

"He had admired the dauntless spirit which young Cockburn displayed, and he sought not his life, but he resolved, if it were possible, to engage him in his service.

"For many weeks Alexander remained as a prisoner in Perth, without hope of rescue, and without being able to learn which cause prevailed—the King, the Parliament, or the Covenant—for the civil war was now carried on by three

parties. At length, by daily rubbing the iron bars o' his prison window wi' some sort o' soap, which he contrived to get, they became so corroded that the stanchels yielded to his hands as rotten wood. He tore the blankets that covered him into ribbons, and fastening them to a portion o' one o' the broken bars, lowered himself to the street.

"It was night, and he fled to the quay, and found concealment in the hold of a vessel, which, on the following day, sailed for London.

"But it is time to return to Alice—the widowed, the all but childless mother. Day after day she prayed, she yearned that she might obtain tidings from her children; but no tidings came. Sleep forsook her solitary pillow, and, like Rachel, she wept for her children because they were not. But a messenger of evil at length arrived, bearing intelligence that four of her sons had fallen in battle, and that the fifth, her youngest, had been made prisoner, and was sentenced to die.

"‘My cup o' wretchedness is full,’ cried the bereaved mother; ‘have I none left—not one—not even my Alexander, my youngest, the comfort o' my age? But I must submit. It is for the best—it is a' for the best, or it wadna be. I should rejoice that I hae been chastened, and that my affliction has been for a cause that will confer liberty o' conscience on posterity, and freedom on our poor distracted country. But, oh, I canna forget, my heart winna do it, that I was once a wife—that I was a mother—and had five sons, the marrow o' whom ye wouldna hae found in a' the Merse; but now my husband is not, and my bairns are not, and I am a lone widow, wearying to be wi' them, and wi' no ane here to speak to me! Yet I ought not to murmur!—no! no! It was me that urged them to go forth and fight the good fight; but, strong as my zeal then was—oh, human nature, and a wife's, a mother's feelings, are strong also.’

"But Alice, in the day of her distress, found a comforter, and one that sympathized wi' her in all her sorrows, in one whom she had but small right to expect to be a friend. When she was left to mourn in solitude, wi' but few to visit

her, there was one who came to condole wi' her; and who, having once visited her, was seldom absent from her side—and that was Flora Stuart, the betrothed o' her youngest son, o' whom she had spoken rashly.

“‘O bairn!’ said she, addressing Flora, ‘little, little, indeed, does Alice Cockburn deserve at yer hands!—for but for me, and my puir Alexander might this day hae been in life, and held yer hand in his. But, forgie me, hinny! It was in a guid cause that I hae sacrificed a’ that was dear to me in this warld—only it was a sair, sair stroke upon a mother!’”

“Flora strove to comfort her; but it was in vain. She didna repine, neither did she murmur as those who have no hope; but her health, which had never been what doctors would call robust, was unable to stand the shock which her feelings had met wi’; and in a few weeks, after hearing o’ the deaths o’ her children Alice Cockburn was gathered wi’ the dead, and Flora Stuart accompanied her body mourning to the grave.

“I have mentioned that Alexander concealed himself on board a vessel which sailed for London. He had been three days at sea before he ventured from the place o’ his concealment, and the captain himself being the son o’ a Covenanter, he was conveyed to the great city in safety. He had been but a short time in London when, meeting with a gentleman who belonged to the neighbourhood o’ Dunse, he learned that his mother was dead, and that his father’s brother, believing that he was dead also, had taken possession o’ the property.

“Alexander had never had the same religious feelings in the cause in which he had been engaged that his father and his brothers had. He fought for the sake o’ what he called liberty, rather than for any feeling o’ conscience; and his ruling passion was a love o’ warlike adventure. He, therefore, had been but a short time in London when he joined the Parliamentary army; and his courage and talents soon drew upon him the notice o’ Cromwell, and others o’ the Parliamentary leaders.

"It was about six years after the battle o' Tippermuir, when one, who was supposed to be a spy from the Royalists, fell into the hands o' a party belonging to the Parliamentary army. He was examined, and evidence, bearing strongly against him, that he had come amongst them secretly to pry out where the army would be most vulnerable, and, if possible, to entrap them into the hands o' their enemies, was produced against him. He was examined a second time, and letters were found concealed about his person which left no doubt o' his being a spy. Some voted that he should be immediately punished with death; but, while all agreed in the nature o' the punishment that ought to be inflicted, there were some who proposed that the execution o' his sentence should be deferred for a few days, until the arrival o' their commanding officer, who was then absent.

"During the day that he was thus respited a daughter o' the spy arrived, and flinging herself upon her knees before the officers who had condemned him, she besought them, with tears, that they would spare her father's life. Her distress might have moved a heart 'o stone. Before them they beheld youth, beauty, loveliness, bathed in misery—bowed down wi' distress. They saw her tears falling at their feet—but they had been used to tears o' blood, and her wretchedness moved them not. All that they would say to her was that their superior officer was not present, and, with the evidence which they had to submit before him, they could not revoke the sentence they had passed.

"On the third day the chief officer o' the party arrived. All that had been proved against the prisoner was told to him, and the papers that had been concealed about him were placed before him. He was about to pronounce the words—

"He shall surely die!' when, pausing, he commanded that the prisoner should be brought before him.

"The doomed one was accordingly ushered into his presence. When the officer beheld him approach he started up—'Can it be possible?' he exclaimed—'Mr. Stuart!' and gasped as he spoke.

"The prisoner also started at hearing his true name, and raising his head, said, 'It is possible! Alexander Cockburn, I am your prisoner—it is your turn now!'

"The officer, who was chief in command o' the party, was none other than Alexander Cockburn, the young Covenanter, and the doomed spy was Mr. Robert Stuart, the father of Flora.

"'Sir,' said Alexander, 'my turn is indeed come—it is come to prove to you that as generous feelings may kindle in the eyes that are barely shaded by the blue bonnet o' a Covenanter as in those that look prondly from beneath the gay beaver o' a Cavalier. There was a time when I stood as you were like to have done now, wi' but a few ticks o' a watch between me and eternity—the watch that ye refused to take from my hand, and when but the expression o' a wish from your lips was all that was required to obtain my pardon, my freedom, and that wish ye wouldna express.'

"'I ken it, lad! I ken it!' cried the prisoner; 'but I am in your power now; take your revenge—do by me as I would have done by you!'

"'No, Mr. Stuart!' replied the other, 'vengeance belongs not to me. But I rejoice that, in this instance, for the sake o' one whose name I may not mention here, I have the power o' pardoning. Soldiers, unloose his bonds—he is free—he is forgiven.'

"The soldiers did as they were commanded.

"'Alexander Cockburn!' exclaimed the late captive, 'will you make me appear more contemptible than a worm in my own eyes? A minute has not passed since you reminded me how I hated you, and how deadly I showed my hatred. The remembrance of the occasion on which I showed that feeling has been like a biting adder in my breast ever since; and now to receive life at your hands would be to make my future existence a mixture of worm-wood and gall.'

"'Say not so,' said Alexander, stepping forward, and taking his hand. 'I would speak with you in private.'

"At that moment a voice was heard without, crying, 'Let

me pass!—pray, let me pass!—let a daughter intercede with your officer for the life of a father!’

“‘Sir! sir!’ exclaimed Alexander—‘it is *her*! it is *her*!—my Flora’s voice!’ And he rushed to the door to meet her.

“Flora!—my own Flora!’ he continued, ‘your father is free!—he is forgiven!—he shall live! What! do you not know me? I am your own Alexander!’

“‘Alexander!’ she cried, springing forward to meet him; and, yielding to the natural feelings o’ the man, her father ran towards them and embraced them both.

“My story,” said the schoolmaster, “is now at a close. Alexander gave up his commission in the Parliamentary army. It was low-water mark wi’ the king’s people, and Mr. Stuart accompanied him; and need I tell ye that so did Flora? They had abundance to keep them comfortable; and on the day after they arrived at Dunse she took them to the kirkyard, and showed them a clean, white headstone o’ Alice Cockburn.

“‘Bless ye for this, my ain wife,’ said Alexander, while the tears were in his een, and he raised her hands to his lips.

“I have only to add,” continued the narrator, “that I, Simon Cockburn, am the great-grandson o’ Alexander Cockburn and Flora Stuart.”

THE DOMINIE'S CLASS.

—o—

“ Their ends as various as the roads they take
In journeying through life.”

—o—

THERE is no class of men to whom the memory turns with more complacency, or more frequently, than to those who “taught the young idea how to shoot.” There may be a few tyrants of the birch, who never inspired a feeling save fear or hatred; yet their number is but few, and I would say that the schoolmaster *is abroad* in more senses than that in which it is popularly applied. He is abroad in the memory and in the affections of his pupils; and his remembrance is cherished wheresoever they may be. For my own part, I never met with a teacher whom I did not love when a boy and reverence when a man; from him before whom I used to stand and endeavour to read my task in his eyes, as he held the book before his face, and the page was reflected in his spectacles—and from his spectacles I spelled my *qu*—to him, who, as an elder friend, bestowed on me my last lesson. When a man has been absent from the place of his nativity for years, and when he returns and grasps the hands of his surviving kindred, one of his first questions to them (after family questions are settled) is—“Is Mr. —, my old schoolmaster, yet alive?” And, if the answer be in the affirmative, one of the first on whom he calls is the dominie of his boyhood; and he enters the well-remembered school—and his first glance is to the seat he last occupied—as an urchin opens the door and admits him, as he gently taps at it, and cries to the master (who is engaged with a class), when the stranger enters—

"Sir, here's one wants you."

Then steps forward the man of letters, looking anxiously—gazing as though he had a right to gaze in the stranger's face; and, throwing out his head, and particularly his chin, while he utters the hesitating interrogative—"Sir?" And the stranger replies—"You don't know me, I suppose? I am such-an-one, who was at your school at such a time." The instiller of knowledge starts—

"What!" cries he, shifting his spectacles, "you Johnnie (Thomas, or Peter, as the case may be) So-and-so? it's not possible! O man, I'm glad to see ye! Ye'll mak me an auld man whether I will or no. And how hae ye been, an' where hae ye been?"—And, as he speaks, he flings his taws over to the corner where his desk stands. The young stranger still cordially shakes his hand, and a few kindly words pass between them, and the teacher, turning to his scholars, says—"You may put by your books and slates, and go for the day;" when an instantaneous movement takes place through the school; there is a closing of books, a clanking of slates, a pocketing of pencils, a clutching for hats, caps, and bonnets—a springing over seats, and a falling of seats—a rushing to the door, and a shouting when at the door—a "*hurrah for play*;"—and the stranger seems to have made a hundred happy, while the teacher and he retire, to

"Drink a cup o' kindness
For auld langsyne."

But to proceed with our story of stories. There was a Dr. Montgomery, a native of Annan, who, after he had been for more than twenty years a physician in India, where he had become rich, visited his early home, which was also the grave of his fathers. There were but few of his relations in life when he returned—for death makes sad havoc in families in twenty years)—but, after he had seen them, he inquired if his old teacher, Mr. Grierson, yet lived?—and being answered in the affirmative, the doctor proceeded to the residence of his first instructor. He found him occupying the same apartments in which he resided thirty years

before, and which were situated on the south side of the main street, near the bridge.

When the first congratulations—the shaking of hands and the expressions of surprise—had been got over, the doctor invited the dominie to dinner; and, after the cloth was withdrawn, and the better part of a bottle of port had vanished between them, the man of medicine thus addressed his ancient preceptor:—

“Can you inform me, sir, what has become of my old class-fellows?—who of them are yet in the land of the living?—who have caught the face of Fortune as she smiled, or been rendered the ‘sport o’ her slippery ba’?” Of the fate of one of them I know something, and to me their history would be more interesting than a romance.”

“Do ye remember the names that ye used to gie ane anither?” inquired the man of letters, with a look of importance, which showed that the history of the whole class was forthcoming.

“I remember them well,” replied the doctor; “there were seven of us; Solitary Sandy—Glaikit Willie—Venturesome Jamie—Cautious Watty—Leein’ Peter—Jock the Dunce—and myself.”

“And hae ye forgot the lounderings that I used to gie ye, for ca’in’ ane anither such names?” inquired Mr. Grierson, with a smile.

“I remember you were displeased at it,” replied the other.

“Weel, doctor,” continued the teacher, “I believe I can gratify your curiosity, an’ I am not sure but you’ll find that the history of your class-fellows is not without interest. The career of some of them has been to me as a recompense for all the pains I bestowed on them, an’ that o’ others has been a source o’ grief. Wi’ some I hae been disappointed, wi’ ithers, surprised; but you’ll allow that I did my utmost to fleece and to thrash your besetting sins out o’ ye a’. I will first inform ye what I know respecting the history of Alexander Rutherford, whom all o’ ye used to ca’ Solitary Sandy, because he wasna a hempy like yourself. Now, sir, hearken to the history of

SOLITARY SANDY.

I remarked that Sandy was an extraordinary callant, and that he would turn out a character that would be heard tell o' in the world; though that he would ever rise in it, as some term it, or become rich in it, I did not believe. I dinna think that e'er I had to raise the taws to Sandy in my life. He had always his task as ready by heart as he could count his fingers. Ye ne'er saw Sandy looking over his book, or nodding wi' it before his face. He and his lessons were like twa acquaintances—fond o' each other's company. I hae observed frae the window, when the rest o' ye would hae been driving at the hand ba', cleeshin' your peerie-taps, or endangerin' your legs wi' the duck stane, Sandy wad been sitting on his hunkers in the garden, looking as earnestly on a daisy or ony bit flower, as if the twa creatures could hae held a crack with ane anither, and the bonny leaves o' the wee silent things which whispered to Sandy how they got their colours, how they peeped forth to meet the kiss o' spring, and how the same Power that created the lowly daisy called man into existence, and fashioned the bright sun and the glorious firmament. He was once dux, and aye dux. From the first moment he got to the head o' the class there he remained as immovable as a mountain. There was nae trapping him; for his memory was like clock-wark. I canna say that he had a great turn for mathematics; but ye will remember, as weel as me, that he was a great Grecian; and he had screeds o' Virgil as ready aff by heart as the twenty-third psalm. Mony a time hae I said concerning him, in the words o' Butler—

' Latin to him's no more difficult,
Than for a blackbird 'tis to whistle.'

The classics, indeed, were his particular hobby; and, though I was proud o' Sandy, I often wished that I could direct his bent to studies o' greater practical utility. His exercises showed that he had an evident genius for poetry, and that o' a very high order; but his parents were poor, and I didna

see what poetry was to put in his pocket. I, therefore, by no means encouraged him to follow out what I conceived to be a profitless though a pleasing propensity; but, on the contrary, when I had an opportunity o' speakin' to him by himsel', I used to say to him—

'Alexander, ye have a happy turn for versification, and there is both boldness and originality about your ideas—though no doubt they would require a great deal of pruning before they could appear in a respectable shape before the world. But you must not indulge in verse-writing. When you do it, let it only be for an exercise, or for amusement when you have nothing better to do. It may make rhyme jingle in your ears, but it will never make sterling coin jink in your pockets. Even the immortal Homer had to sing his own verses about the streets; and ye have heard the epigram—

'Seven cities now contend for *Homer dead*,
Through which the *living Homer* begged his bread.'

Boethius, like Savage in our own days, died in a prison; Terence was a slave, and Plautus did the work of a horse. Cervantes perished for lack of food on the same day that our great Shakspeare died; but Shakspeare had worldly wisdom as well as heavenly genius. Camoens died in an alms-house. The magical Spenser was a suppliant at Court for years for a paltry pension, till hope deferred made his heart sick, and he vented his disappointment in these words—

'I was promised, on a time,
To have reason for my rhyme :
From that time unto this season,
I received not rhyme nor reason.'

Butler asked for bread, and they gave him a stone. Dryden lived between the hand and the mouth. Poor Otway perished through penury; and Chatterton, the inspired boy, terminated his wretchedness with a pennyworth of poison. But there is a more striking example than these, Sandy. It was but the other day that our immortal countryman, Robbie Burns—the glory o' our age—sank at our very door

neglected and in poverty, wi' a broken heart, into the grave. 'Sandy,' added I, 'never think o' being a poet. If ye attempt it, ye will embark on an ocean where, for every one that réaches their desired haven, ninety and nine become a wreck.'

On such occasions Sandy used to listen most attentively an' crack to me very auld-farrantly. Well, sir, it was just after ye went to learn to be a doctor that I resolved to try an' do something to push him forward mysel', as his parents were not in ability; and I had made application to a gentleman on his behalf to use his influence to procure him a bursary in ane o' the universities, when Sandy's faither died, and, puir man, left hardly as meikle behind him as would pay the expenses o' his funeral. This was a death-blow to Sandy's prospects an' my hopes. He wasna seventeen at the time, and his widowed mother had five bairns younger. He was the only ane in the family that she could look up to as a bread-winner. It was about harvest; an', when the shearing commenced, he went out wi' ithers an' took his place on the rig. As it was his first year, an' he was but a learner, his wages were but sma'; but sma' as they were, at the end o' the season he brought them hame, an' my puir blighted scholar laddie thought himsel' a man, when he placed his earnings, to a farthing, in his mother's hand.

I was sorry for Sandy. It pained me to see one by whom I had had so much credit, and who, I was conscious, would make ane o' the brightest ornaments o' the pu'pit that ever entered it, throwing his learning and his talents awa, an' doomed to be a labouring man. I lost mony a night's sleep on his account; but I was determined to serve him if I could, and I at last succeeded in getting him appointed tutor in a gentleman's family o' the name o' Crompton, owre in Cumberland. He was to teach twa bits o' laddies English and arithmetic, Latin and Greek. He wasna out eighteen when he entered upon the duties o' his office; and great cause had I to be proud o' my scholar, an' satisfied wi' my recommendation; for, before he had been six months in his situation, I received a letter from the gentleman himself,

intimating his esteem for Sandy, the great progress his sons had made under his tuition, and expressin' his gratitude to me for recommending such a tutor. He was, in consequence, kind and generous to my auld scholar, and he doubled his wages, and made him presents beside; so that Sandy was enabled to assist his mother and his brethren.

But we ne'er hae a sunny day, though it be the langest day in summer, but, sooner or later, a rainy ane follows it. Now, Mr. Crompton had a daughter about a year younger than Sandy. She wasna what people would ca' a pretty girl, for I hae seen her; but she had a sonsy face and intelligent een. She also, forsooth, wrote sonnets to the moon, and hymns to the rising sun. She of a' women was the maist likely to bewitch him. A strong liking sprang up between them. They couldna conceal their partiality for ane anither. He was everything that was perfect in her een, an' she was an angel in his. Her name was Ann; and he had celebrated it in every measure, from the hop-and-step line of four syllables to that o' fourteen, which rolleth like the echoing o' a trumpet.

Now, her faither, though a ceevil an' a kind man, was also a shrewd, sharp-sighted, and determined man; an' he saw the flutter that had risen up in the breasts o' his daughter and the young tutor. So he sent for Sandy, and without seeming to be angry wi' him, or even hinting at the cause—

'Mr. Rutherford,' said he, 'you are aware that I am highly gratified with the manner in which you have discharged the duties of tutor to my boys; but I have been thinking that it will be more to their advantage that their education, for the future, be a public one, and to-morrow I intend sending them to a boarding-school in Yorkshire.'

'To-morrow!' said Sandy, mechanically, scarce knowing what he said, or where he stood.

'To-morrow,' added Mr. Crompton, 'and I have sent for you, sir, in order to settle with you, respecting your salary.'

This was bringing the matter home to the business and the bosom of the scholar somewhat suddenly. Little as he was versed in the ways of the world, something like the real

cause for the hasty removal of his pupils to Yorkshire began to dawn upon his mind. He was stricken with dismay and with great agony, and he longed to pour out his soul upon the gentle bosom of Ann. But she had gone on a visit with her mother to friends in a different part of the country, and Mr. Crompton was to set out with his sons for Yorkshire on the following day. Then, also, would Sandy have to return to the humble roof of his mother. When he retired to pack up his books and his few things he wrung his hands—yea, there were tears upon his cheeks; and, in the bitterness of his spirit, he said—

‘My own sweet Ann! and I shall never see thee again—never hear thee—never hope!’ And he laid his hand upon his forehead, and pressed it there, repeating as he did so—‘never! oh, never!’

I was surprised beyond measure when Sandy came back to Annan, and wi’ a woe-begone countenance called upon me. I thought that Mr. Crompton was not a man of the discernment and sagacity that I had given him credit to be, and I desired Sandy not to lay it so sair to heart, for that something else would cast up. But, in a day or two, I received a letter from the gentleman himself, showing me how matters stood, and giving me to understand the *why* and the *wherefore*.

‘O the gowk!’ said I, ‘what business had he to fa’ in love, when he had the bairns and his books to mind?’

So I determined to rally him a wee thought on the subject, in order to bring him back to his senses; for, when a haffins laddie is labouring under the first dizziness o’ a bonny lassie’s influence I dinna consider that he is capable o’ either seeing, feeling, hearing, or acting wi’ the common-sense discretion o’ a reasonable being. It is a pleasant heating and wandering o’ the brain. Therefore, the next time I saw him—

‘Sandy,’ says I, ‘wha was’t laid Troy in ashes?’ He at first started and stared at me, rather vexed like, but at last he answered, wi’ a sort o’ forced laugh—

‘A woman.’

‘A woman, was it?’ says I; ‘an’ wha was the cause o’ Sandy Rutherford losing his situation as tutor, an’ being sent back to Annan?’

‘Sir!’ said he, and he scowled down his eyebrows, and gied a look at me that would hae spained a ewe’s lamb. I saw that he was too far gone, and that his mind was in a state that it would not be safe to trifle wi’; so I tried him no more upon the subject.

Weel, as his mother, puir woman, had enough to do, and couldna keep him in idleness, and as there was naething for him in Annan, he went to Edinburgh to see what would cast up, and what his talents and education would do for him there. He had recommendations from several gentlemen, and also from myself. But month after month passed on, and he was like to hear of nothing. His mother was becoming extremely unhappy on his account, and the more so because he had given up writing, which astonished me a great deal, for I could not divine the cause of such conduct as not to write to his own mother, to say that he was well or what he was doing; and I was the more surprised at it because of the excellent opinion I had entertained of his character and disposition. However, I think it would be about six months after he had left, I received a letter from him; and, as that letter is of importance in giving you an account of his history, I shall just step along to the school for it, where I have it carefully placed in my desk, and shall bring it and any other papers that I think may be necessary in giving you an account of your other school-fellows.

Thus saying, Dominie Grierson, taking up his three-cornered hat and silver-mounted walking-stick, stalked out of the room. And, as people generally like to have some idea of the sort of person who is telling them a story, I shall here describe to them the appearance of Mr. Grierson. He was a fine-looking old man, about five feet nine inches high—his age might be about threescore and fifteen, and he was a bachelor. His hair was as white as the driven snow, yet as fresh and as thick as though he had been but thirty. His face was pale. He could not properly be

called corpulent, but his person had an inclination that way. His shoes were fastened with large silver buckles; he wore a pair of the finest black lamb's-wool stockings; breeches of the same colour, fastened at the knees by buckles similar to those in his shoes. His coat and waistcoat were also black, and both were exceedingly capacious; for the former, with its broad skirts, which descended almost to his heels, would have made a greatcoat now-a-days; and in the kingly flaps of the latter, which defended his loins, was cloth enough and to spare to have made a modern vest. This, with the broad-brimmed, round-crowned, three-cornered hat, already referred to, a pair of spectacles, and the silver-mounted cane, completed the outward appearance of Dominie Grierson, with the exception of his cambric handkerchief, which was whiter than his own locks, and did credit to the cleanliness of his housekeeper, and her skill as a laundress.

In a few moments he returned with Sandy's letter and other papers in his hand, and, helping himself to another glass of wine, he rubbed the glass of his spectacles with his handkerchief, and said—

'Now, doctor, here is poor Sandy's letter; listen and ye shall hear it.'

'EDINBURGH, *June 10, 17—.*

'HONOURED SIR,—I fear that, on account of my not having written to you, you will, ere now, have accused me of ingratitude; and when I tell you that, until the other day, I have not for months even written to my mother, you may think me undutiful as well as ungrateful. But my own breast holds me guiltless of both. When I arrived here I met with nothing but disappointments, and those I found at every hand. For many weeks I walked the streets of this city in despair; hopeless as a fallen angel. I was hungry, and no one gave me to eat; but they knew not that I was in want. Keen misery held me in its grasp—ruin caressed me, and laughed at its plaything. I will not pain you by detailing a catalogue of the privations I endured, and which none but those who have felt and fathomed the depths of misery can imagine. Through your letter of recommendation I was engaged to give private lessons to two pupils, but the salary was small, and that was only to be paid quarterly. While I was teaching them I was starving, living on a

penny a day. But this was not all. I was frequently without a lodging; and being expelled from one for lack of the means of paying for it it was many days before I could venture to inquire for another. My lodging was on a common stair, or on the bare sides of the Calton; and my clothes, from exposure to the weather, became unsightly. They were no longer fitting garments for one who gave lessons in a fashionable family. For several days I observed the eyes of the lady of the house where I taught fixed with a most supercilious and scrutinizing expression upon my shabby and unfortunate coat. I saw and felt that she was weighing the shabbiness of my garments against my qualifications, and I trembled for the consequence. In a short time my worst fears were realized; for, one day, calling as usual, instead of being shown into a small parlour, where I gave my lessons, the man-servant who opened the door permitted me to stand in the lobby, and, in two minutes, returned with two guineas upon a small silver plate, intimating, as he held them before me, that "the services of Mr. Rutherford were no longer required." The sight of the two guineas took away the bitterness and mortification of the abrupt dismissal. I pocketed them, and engaged a lodging; and never until that night did I know or feel the exquisite luxury of a deep, dreamless sleep. It was bathing in Lethe, and rising refreshed, having no consciousness, save the grateful feeling of the cooling waters of forgetfulness around you. Having, some weeks ago, translated an old deed, which was written in Latin, for a gentleman who is what is called an in-door advocate, and who has an extensive practice, he has been pleased to take me into his office, and has fixed on me a liberal salary. He advises me to push my way to the bar, and kindly promises his assistance. I shall follow his advice, and I despair not but that I may one day solicit the hand of the only woman I ever have loved, or can love, from her father, as his equal.—I am, Sir, yours indebtedly,

'ALEX. RUTHERFORD.'

Now, sir (continued the dominie), about three years after I had received this letter my old scholar was called to the Bar, and a brilliant first appearance he made. Bench, Bar, and jury were lost in wonder at the power o' his eloquence. A Demosthenes had risen up amongst them. The half o' Edinburgh spoke o' naething but the young advocate. But it was on the very day that he made his first appearance

as a pleader that I received a letter from Mr. Crompton, begging to know if I could gie him ony information respecting the old tutor o' his family, and stating, in the language of a broken-hearted man, that his only daughter was then upon her death-bed, and that before she died she begged she might be permitted to see and to speak with Alexander Rutherford. I enclosed the letter, and sent it off to the young advocate. He was sitting at a dinner-party, receiving the homage of beauty and the congratulations of learned men when the fatal letter was put into his hands. He broke the seal—his hand shook as he read—his cheeks grew pale—and large drops of sweat burst upon his brow. He rose from the table. He scarce knew what he did. But, within half an hour, he was posting on his way to Cumberland. He reached the house, her parents received him with tears, and he was conducted into the room where the dying maiden lay. She knew his voice as he approached.

'He is come!—he is come!—he loves me still!' cried the poor thing, endeavouring to raise herself upon her elbow.

Sandy approached the bedside—he burst into tears—he bent down and kissed her pale and wasted cheeks, over which death seemed already to have cast its shadow.

'Ann! my beloved Ann!' said he, and he took her hand in his, and pressed it to his lips; 'do not leave me; we shall yet be happy!'

Her eyes brightened for a moment—in them joy struggled with death, and the contest was unequal. From the day that he had been sent from her father's house, she had withered away as a tender flower that is transplanted to an unkindly soil. She desired that they would lift her up, and she placed her hand upon his shoulder, and, gazing anxiously in his face, said—

And Alexander still loves me—even in death!'

Yes, dearest—yes!' he replied. But she had scarce heard his answer, and returned it with a smile of happiness, when her head sank upon his bosom, and a deep sigh escaped from hers. It was her last. Her soul seemed only to have lingered till her eyes might look on him. She was

removed a corpse from his breast; but on that breast the weight of death was still left. He became melancholy—his ambition died—she seemed to have been the only object that stimulated him to pursue fame and to seek for fortune. In intense study he sought to forget his grief—or rather he made them companions—till his health broke under them; and, in the thirtieth year of his age, died one who possessed talents and learning that would have adorned his country, and rendered his name immortal. Such, sir, is the brief history o' yer auld class-fellow, Solitary Sandy.

In the history o'

GLAIKIT WILLIE

(continued Mr. Grierson) the only thing remarkable is that he has been as fortunate a man as he was a thochtless laddie. After leaving the school he flung his Greek and Latin aside, and that was easily done, for it was but little that he ever learned, and less that he remembered, for he paid so little attention to onything he did that what he got by heart one day he forgot the next. In spite o' the remonstrances o' his friends, naething would haud Willie but he would be a sailor. Weel, he was put on board o' an American trader, and for several years there was naething heard o' concerning him, but accidents that had happened him, and all through his glaikit-ness. Sometimes he was fa'ing owre a boat and was mostly drowned; and, at other times, we heard o' his fa'ing head-long into the ship's hold; ance o' his tumbling overboard in the middle o' the great Atlantic; and, at last, o' his fa'ing from the mast upon the deck, and having his legs broken. It was the luckiest thing that ever happened him. It brought him to think, and gied him leisure to do it; he was laid up for twelve weeks, and, during part o' the time, he applied himself to navigation, in the elements o' which science I had instructed him. Soon after his recovery he got the command o' a vessel, and was very fortunate, and, for several years, he has been sole owner of a number of vessels, and is reputed to be very rich. He also married weel, as the phrase runs,

for the woman had a vast of money, only she was—a mulatto. That, sir, is a' I ken concerning William Armstrong, or, as ye ca'ed him, Glaikit Willie; for he was a callant that was so thochtless when under my care that he never interested me a great deal. And noo, sir, I shall gie ye a' the particulars I know concerning the fate o'

VENTURESOME JAMIE.

Ye will remember him best o' ony o' them, I reckon; for even when ye were baith bits o' callants there was a sort o' rivalry between ye for the affections o' bonny Katie Alison, the loveliest lassie that I ever had at my school. I hae frequently observed the looks of jealousy that used to pass between ye when she seemed to show mair kindness to ane than anither; and, when ye little thocht I saw ye, I hae noticed ane o' ye pushing oranges into her hand, and anither sweeties. When she got a bit comb, too, to fasten up her gowden hair, I weel divined whose pennies had purchased it—for they were yours, Doctor. I remember, also, hoo ye was aye a greater favourite wi' her than Jamie, and hoo he challenged ye to fecht him for her affections, and owrecam' ye in the battle, and sent ye to the school next day wi' yer face a' disfigured—and I, as in duty bound, gied each o' ye a heartier threshin' than ye had gien ane anither. Katie hung her head a' the time, and when she looked up, a tear was rowin' in her bonny blue een. But ye left the school and the country-side when ye was little mair than seventeen; and the next thing that we heard o' ye was that ye had gane oot to India about three years afterwards. Yer departure evidently removed a load from Jamie's breast. He followed Katie like her shadow, though with but little success, as far as I could perceive, and as it was generally given out.

But, ye must remember, in his case, the name o' Venturesome Jamie was well applied. Never in my born days did I know such a callant. He would have climbed the highest trees as though he had been speelin' owre a common yett,

and swung himsel' by the heels frae their tapmost branches. Oh, he was a terrible laddie! When I hae seen ye a' bathing in the river, sometimes I used to tremble for him. He was a perfect amphibious animal. I have seen him dive from a height o' twenty or thirty feet, and remain under the water till I almost lost my breath wi' anxiety for his uprising; and then he would have risen at as many yards distant from the place where he had dived. I recollect o' hearing o' his permitting himsel' to be suspended owre a precipice aboon a hundred feet high, wi' a rope fastened round his oxters, and three laddies like himsel' hauding on by the ither end o't—and this was dune merely to harry the nest o' a water-wagtail. Had the screams o' the callants, who fund him owre heavy for them, and that they were unable to draw him up again, not brought some ploughmen to their assistance, he must have been precipitated into eternity. However, as I intended to say, it was shortly after the news arrived o' your having sailed for India, that a fire broke out in the dead o' night in a house occupied by Katie Alison's father. Never shall I forget the uproar and consternation o' that terrible night. There was not a countenance in the town but was pale wi' terror. The flames roared and raged from every window, and were visible through some parts in the roof. The great black clouds o' smoke seemed rushing from the crater of a volcano. The floors o' the second story were falling, and crashing, and crackling, and great burning sparks, some o' them as big as a man's hand, were rising in thousands and tens o' thousands from the flaming ruins, and were driven by the wind, like a shower o' fire, across the heavens. It was the most fearsome sight I had ever beheld. But this was not the worst o't; for at a window in the third story, which was the only one in the house from which the flames were not bursting, stood bonny Katie Alison, wringing her hands and screaming for assistance, while her gowden hair fell upon her shouthers, and her cries were heard aboon the raging o' the conflagration. I heard her crying distinctly, 'My father! my father! will nobody save my father?' for he lay ill of a fever in the room where she was, and was unconscious of his situation.

But there was none to render them assistance. At times the flames and the smoke, issuing from the windows below, concealed her from the eyes of the multitude. Several had attempted her rescue, but all of them had been forced to retreat, and some of them scorched fearfully; for in many places the stairs had given way, and the flames were bursting on every side. They were attempting to throw up a rope to her assistance—for the flames issued so fiercely from the lower windows that, though a ladder had been raised, no man could have ascended it—when, at that moment, my old scholar, James Johnstone (Venturesome Jamie, indeed!) arrived. He heard the cries o' Katie—he beheld her hands outstretched for help—'Let me past!—let me past!—ye cowards! ye cowards!' cried he, as he eagerly forced his way through the crowd. He rushed into the door, from which the dense smoke and the sparks were issuing as from a great furnace. There was a thrill o' horror through the crowd, for they kenned his character, and they kenned also his fondness for Katie—and no one expected to see him in life again. But, in less than ten seconds from his rushing in at the door, he was seen to spring forward to the window where Katie stood—he flung his arm round her waist, and, in an instant, both disappeared—but, within a quarter of a minute, he rushed out at the street door, through the black smoke and the thick sparks, wi' the bonny creature that he adored in his arms. O doctor, had ye heard the shout that burst frae the multitude!—there was not one amongst them at that moment that couldna have hugged Jamie to his heart. His hands were sore burned, and in several places his clothes were on fire. Katie was but little hurt; but, on finding herself on the street, she cast an anxious and despairing look towards the window from which she had been snatched, and again wringing her hands, exclaimed, in accents of bitterness that go through my heart to this day—

'My father!—oh, my father!—is there no help for him?—shall my father perish?'

'The rope!—gie me the rope!' cried Jamie. He snatched

it from the hand of a bystander, and again rushed into the smoking ruins. The consternation of the crowd became greater, and their anxiety more intense than before. Full three minutes passed, and nothing was seen of him. The crowded street became as silent as death; even those who were running backward and forward carrying water for a time stood still. The suspense was agonizing. At length he appeared at the window with the sick man wrapt up in the bed-clothes, and holding him to his side with his right arm around him. The hope and fear of the people became indescribable. Never did I witness such a scene!—never may I witness such again! Having fastened one end of the rope to the bed, he flung the other from the window to the street; and, grasping it with his left hand, he drew himself out at the window, with Katie's father in his arm, and, crossing his feet around the rope, he slid down to the street, bearing his burden with him! Then, sir, the congratulations o' the multitude were unbounded. Every one was anxious to shake him by the hand; but, what with the burning his right hand had sustained, and the worse than burning his left hand had suffered wi' the sliding down a rope frae a third story wi' a man under his arm, I may say that my venturesome and gallant auld scholar hadna a hand to shake.

Ye canna be surprised to hear—(and, at the time o' life ye've arrived at, ye'll be no longer jealous—besides, during dinner, I think ye spoke o' having a wife and family)—I say, therefore, doctor, that ye'll neither be jealous nor surprised to hear that from that day Katie's dryness to Jamie melted down. Moreover, as ye had gane out to India, where ye would be mair likely to look after siller than think o' a wife, and as I understand ye had dropped correspondence for some length o' time, ye couldna think yoursel' in ony way slighted. Now, folk say that 'nineteen *nay-says* are half a *yes*.' For my part (and my age is approaching the heels o' the patriarchs) I never put it in the power o' woman born to say *No* to me. But, as I have heard and believe, Katie had said *No* to Jamie before the fire, not only nineteen times

but thirty-eight times twice told, and he found seventy-six (which is about my age) nae nearer a *yea* than the first *nay*. And folk said it was a' on account o' a foolish passion for the doctor laddie that had gane abroad. But Katie was a kind, gratefu' lassie. She couldna look wi' cauldness upon the man that had not only saved her life but her father's also; and I ought to have informed you that, within two minutes from the time of her father's being snatched from the room where he lay, the floor fell in, and the flames burst from the window where Katie had been standing a few minutes before.

Her father recovered from the fever, but he died within six months after the fire, and left her a portionless orphan, or what was next door to it. Jamie urged her to make him happy, and at last she consented, and they were married. But ye remember that his parents were in affluent circumstances; they thought he had demeaned himself by his marriage, and they shut their door upon him, and disowned him a'thegither. As he was his father's heir, he was brought up to no calling or business whatsoever; and when the auld man not only vowed to cut him off wi' a shilling, on account o' his marriage, but absolutely got his will altered accordingly, what did the silly lad do, but, in desperation, list into a regiment that was gaun abroad. 'The laddie has done it in a fit o' passion,' said I, 'and what will become o' poor Katie?' Weel, although it was said that the lassie never had ony particular affection for him, but just married him out o' gratitude, and although several genteel families in the neighbourhood offered her respectable and comfortable situations (for she was universally liked), yet the strange creature preferred to follow the hard fortunes o' Jamie, who had been disowned on her account, and she implored the officers o' the regiment to be allowed to accompany him. It is possible that they were interested with her appearance, and what they had heard of his connection, and the manner in which he had been treated, for they granted her request; and about a month after he enlisted the regiment marched from Carlisle, and Katie accompanied her husband. They

went abroad somewhere; to the East or West Indies, I believe; but from that day to this I have never heard a word concerning either the one or the other, or whether they be living or not. All I know is that the auld man died within two years after his son had become a soldier, and keeping his resentment to his latest breath, actually left his property to a brother's son. And that, sir, is all that I know of Venturesome Jamie, and your old sweetheart, Katie."

The doctor looked thoughtful—exceedingly thoughtful; and the auld dominie, acquiring additional loquacity as he went on, poured out another glass, and added—

"But come, doctor, we will drink a bumper, 'for auld langsyne,' to the lassie wi' the golden locks, be she dead or living."

"With my whole heart and soul," replied the doctor, impassionedly; and, pouring out a glass, he drained it to the dregs.

"The auld feeling is not quenched yet, doctor," said the venerable teacher, "and I am sorry for it; for, had I known, I would have spoken more guardedly. But I will proceed to gie ye an account o' the rest o' your class-fellows, and I will do it briefly. There was Walter Fairbairn, who went amongst ye by the name o'

CAUTIOUS WATTY.

He was the queerest laddie that ever I had at my school. He had neither talent nor cleverness: but he made up for both, and I may say more than made up for both, by method and application. Ye would have said that nature had been in a miserly humour when it made his brains; but, if it had been niggardly in the quantity, it certainly had spared no pains in placing them properly. He was the very reverse o' Solitary Sandy. I never could get Watty to scan a line or construe a sentence right in my days. He did not seem to understand the nature o' words—or, at least, in so far as applied to sentiment, idea, or fine writing. Figures were Watty's alphabet; and, from his earliest years, pounds,

shillings, and pence were the syllables by which he joined them together. The abstruser points of mathematics were beyond his intellect; but he seemed to have a liking for the *certainty* of the science, and he manifested a wish to master it. My housekeeper that then was has informed me that, when a' the rest o' ye wad hae been selling your copies as waste paper, for *taffy*, or what some ca' *treacle-candy*, Watty would only part wi' his to the paper purchaser for money down; and when ony o' ye took a greenin' for the sweet things o' the shopkeeper, without a halfpenny to purchase one, Watty would volunteer to lend ye the money until a certain day, upon condition that ye would then pay him a penny for the loan o' his halfpenny. But he exhibited a grand trait o' this disposition when he cam' to learn the rule o' *Compound Interest*. Indeed, I need not say he *learned* it, for he literally *devoured* it. He wrought every question in Dilworth's Rule within two days; and, when he had finished it, (for he seldom had his slate away from my face, and I was half tired wi' saying to him, 'That will do, sir,') he came up to my desk, and says he, wi' a face as earnest as a judge—

'May I go through this rule again, sir?'

'I think ye understand it, Watty,' said I, rather significantly.

'But I would like to be perfect in it, sir,' answered he.

'Then go through it again, Watty,' said I, 'and I have nae doubt but ye will be *perfect* in it very quickly.'

I said this wi' a degree o' irony which I was not then, and which I am not now, in the habit of exhibiting before my scholars; but from what I had observed and heard o' him it betrayed to me a trait in human nature that literally disgusted me. But I have no pleasure in dwelling upon his history. Shortly after leaving the school he was sent up to London to an uncle; and, as his parents had the means o' setting him up in the world, he was there to make a choice o' a profession.

After looking about the great city for a time, it was the choice and pleasure o' Cautious Watty to be bound as an apprentice to a pawnbroker. He afterwards commenced

business for himself, and every day in his life indulging in his favourite study, Compound Interest, and, as far as he durst, putting it in practice, he, in a short time, became rich. But, as his substance increased, he did not confine himself to portable articles, or such things as are usually taken in pledge by the members of his profession; but he took estates in pledge, receiving the title-deeds as his security, and in such cases he did exact his Compound Interest to the last farthing to which he could stretch it. He neither knew the meaning of generosity nor mercy. Shakspeare's beautiful apostrophe to the latter godlike attribute in the *Merchant of Venice* would have been flat nonsense in the estimation of Watty. He had but one answer to every argument and to every case, and which he laid to his conscience in all his transactions (if he had a conscience), and that was—'A bargain's a bargain!' This was his ten times repeated phrase every day. It was the doctrine by which he swore; and Shylock would have died wi' envy to have seen Watty exacting his '*pound o' flesh*.' I have only to tell ye that he has been twice married. The first time was to a widow four years older than his mother, wi' whom he got ten thousand. The second time was to a maiden lady who had been a coquette and flirt in her day, but who, when the deep crow-feet upon her brow began to reflect sermons from her looking-glass, became a patronizer of piety and religious institutions. Watty heard o' her fortune, and o' her disposition and habits. He turned an Episcopalian because she was one. He became a sitter and a regular attender in the same pew in the church. He began his courtship by opening the pew door to her when he saw her coming, before the sexton reached it. He next sought her out the services for the day in the prayer-book—he had it always open and ready to put in her hand. He dusted the cushion on which she was to sit with his handkerchief as she entered the pew. He, in short, showed her a hundred little pious attentions. The sensibility of the converted flirt was affected by them. At length he offered her his arm from the pew to the hackney coach or sedan chair which waited for her at the church

door; and eventually he led her to the altar in the seventy-third year of her age; when, to use his own words, he married her thirty thousand pounds, and took the old woman before the minister as a witness. Such, sir, is all I know concerning Cautious Watty.

The next o' your auld class-mates that I have to notice (continued Mr. Grierson) is

LEEIN' PETER.

Peter Murray was the cause o' mair grief to me than ony scholar that ever was at my school. He could not tell a story the same way in which he heard it, or give ye a direct answer to a positive question, had it been to save his life. I sometimes was at a loss whether to attribute his grievous propensity to a defect o' memory, a preponderance o' imagination over baith memory and judgment, or to the natural depravity o' his heart, and the force o' abominable habits early acquired. Certain it is, that all the thrashing that I could thrash I couldna get the laddie to speak the truth. His parents were perpetually coming to me to lick him soundly for this lie and the other lie; and I did lick him, until I saw that bodily punishment was of no effect. Moral means were to be tried, and I did try them. I tried to shame him out o' it. I reasoned wi' him. I showed him the folly and the enormity o' his offence, and also pointed out its consequences—but I might as weel hae spoken to the stane in the wa'. He was Leein' Peter still. After he left me he was a while wi' a grocer, and a while wi' a haberdasher, and then he went to a painter, and after that he was admitted into a writer's office; but, one after another, they had to turn him away, and a' on account o' his unconquerable habit of uttering falsehoods. His character became so well known that nobody about the place would take him to be anything. He was a sad heart-break to his parents, and they were as decent people as ye could meet wi'. But, as they had respectable connections, they got him into some situation about Edinburgh, where his character and his failings were unknown.

But it was altogether useless. He was turned out of one situation after another, and a' on account of his incurable and dangerous habit, until his friends could do no more for him. Noo, doctor, I dare say ye may have observed that a confirmed drunkard, rather than want drink, will steal to procure it—and, as sure as that is the case, tak my word for it that, in nine cases out of ten, he who begins by being a habitual liar will end in being a thief. Such was the case wi' Leein' Peter. After being disgraced and turned from one situation after anither he at last was caught in the act o' purloining his master's property, and cast into prison. He broke his mother's heart, and covered his father's grey hairs wi' shame; and he sunk from one state o' those prowlers and pests o' society who are to be found in every large town, and another, till now, I believe, he is ane o' those prowlers and who live naebody can tell how, but every one can tell that it cannot be honestly. Such, sir, has been the fate o' Leein' Peter.

There is only another o' your book-mates that I have to make mention o', and that is John Mathewson, or

JOCK THE DUNCE.

Many a score o' times hae I said that Jock's head was as impervious to learnin' as a nether millstane. It would hae been as easy to hae driven Mensuration into the head o' an ox as instruction into the brain o' Jock Mathewson. He was born a dunce. I fleeced him, and I coaxed him, and I kicked him, and I cuffed him; but I might as weel hae kicked my heel upon the floor, or fleeced the fireplace. Jock was knowledge-proof. All my efforts were o' no avail. I could get him to learn nothing and to comprehend nothing. Often I had half made up my mind to turn him away from the school, for I saw that I never would have any credit by the blockhead. But what was most annoying was, that here was his mother at me, every hand-awhile, saying—

'Mr. Grierson, I'm really surprised at ye. My son John is not comin' on ava. I really wush ye wad tak mair pains

wi' him. It is an unco thing to be payin' you guid money, and the laddie to be getting nae guid for it. I would hae ye to understand that his faither doesna make his money sae easily—no by sitting on a seat, or walking up and down a room, as ye do. There's such a ane's son awa into the Latin nae less, I understand, and my John no out o' the Testament. But depend upon it, Mr. Grierson, if ye dinna try to do something wi' him I maun tak him awa from your school, and that is the short and the lang o't.'

'Do sae, ma'am,' said I, 'and I'll thank ye. Mercy me! it's a bonny thing, indeed—do ye suppose that I had the makin' o' your son? If nature had formed his head out of a whinstane, can I transform it into marble? Your son would try the patience o' Job—his head is thicker than a door-post, I can mak naething o' him, I would sooner teach a hundred than be troubled wi' him.'

'Hundred here, hundred there!' said she, in a tift; 'but it's a hard matter, Mr. Grierson, for his faither and me to be payin' ye money for naething; an' if ye dinna try to mak something o' him I'll tak him from your school, an' that will be baith seen an' heard tell o'!'

So saying, away she would drive, tossing her head wi' the airs o' my Lady. Ye canna, conceive, sir, what a teacher has to put up wi'. Thomson says—

'Delightful task,
To teach the young idea how to shoot!'

I wish to goodness he had tried it, and a month's specimen o' its *delights* would have surfeited him, and instead o' what he has written, he would have said—

Degrading thought,
To be each snivelling blockhead's parent's slave!

Now, ye'll remember that Jock was perpetually sniffling and gaping wi' his mouth, or even sucking his thumb like an idiot! There was nae keeping the animal cleanly, much less instructing him: and then, if he had the book in his hand, there he sat staring owre it, wi' a look as vacant and stupid as a tortoise. Or, if he had the slate before him, there

was he drawing scores on't, or amusing himsel' wi' twirling and twisting the pencil in the string through the frame. Never had I such a lump o' stupidity within the walls o' my school.

After his leaving me, he was put as an apprentice to a bookseller. I thought of all the callings under the sun that which had been chosen for him was the least suited to a person o' his capacity. But—would you believe it, sir?—Jock surprised us a.' He fairly turned the corner on a' my calculations. When he began to look after the lassies he also began to 'smart up.' He came to my night-school, when he would be about eighteen, and I was perfectly astonished at the change that had taken place, even in the appearance o' the callant. His very nose, which had always been so stuffed and thick-like, was now an ornament to his face. He had become altogether a lively, fine-looking lad; and, more marvellous still, his whole heart's desire seemed to be to learn; and he did learn with a rapidity that both astonished and delighted me. I actually thought the instructions which I had endeavoured to instil into him for years, and apparently without effect, had been lying dormant, as it were, in the chambers o' his brain, like a cuckoo in winter—that they had been sealed up as fast as I imparted them, by some cause that I did not comprehend, and that now they had got vent, and were issuing out in rapid and vigorous strength, like a person refreshed after a sleep.

After he had been two years at the night-school, so far from considering him a dunce, I regarded him as an amazing clever lad; from the instance I had had in him I began to perceive that precocity o' intellect was nae proof o' its power. Well, shortly after the time I am speaking o', he left Annan for Glasgow, and after being a year or twa there he commenced business upon his own account. I may safely say, that never was man more fortunate. But, as his means increased, he did not confine himself to the business in which he had been brought up, but he became an extensive ship-owner; he also became a partner in a cotton-mill concern. He was elected a member of the town council, and was distinguished as a leading member and orator of the

guild. Eventually he rose to be one of the city magistrates. He is now also an extensive landed proprietor; and I even hear it affirmed that it is in contemplation to put him in nomination for some place or another at the next election. Such things happen, doctor—and wha would hae thoct it o' Jock the Dunce?

Now, sir (added the dominie), so far as I have been able, I have given you the history of your class-fellows. Concerning you, doctor, I have known less and heard less than o' ony o' them. You being so far away, and so long away, and your immediate relations about here being dead, so that ye have dropped correspondence, I have heard nothing concerning ye, and I have often been sorry on that account; for, believe me, doctor—(here the doctor pushed the bottle to him, and the old man, helping himself to another glass and drinking it, again continued)—I say, believe me, doctor, that I never had two scholars under my care, o' whose talents I had greater opinion than o' Solitary Sandy and yoursel'; and it has often vexed me that I could hear naething concerning ye, or whether ye were dead or living. Now, sir, if ye'll favour me wi' an account o' your history, from the time o' your going out to India, your auld dominie will be obliged to ye; for I like to hear concerning ye all, as though ye had been my ain bairns.

"There is little of interest in my history, sir," said the doctor; "but, so far as there is any, your wish shall be gratified." And he proceeded as is hereafter written.

THE DOCTOR'S STORY.

"In your history, sir, of Venturesome Jamie, which you are unable to finish, you mentioned the rivalry that existed between him and me for the affections of bonny Katie Alison. James was a noble fellow. I am not ashamed that I had such a rival. In our youth I esteemed him while I hated him. But, sir, I do not remember the time when Katie Alison was not as a dream in my heart—when I did

not tremble at her touch. Even when we pulled the gowans and the cowslips together, though there had been twenty present, it was for Katie that I pulled mine. When we plaited the rushes, I did it for her. She preferred me to Jamie, and I knew it. When I left your school, and when I proceeded to India, I did not forget her. But, as you said, men go there to make money—so did I. My friends laughed at my boyish fancy—they endeavoured to make me ashamed of it. I became smitten with the eastern disease of fortune-making, and, though I did not forget her, I neglected her.

But sir, to drop this; I was not twenty-one when I arrived in Bombay; nor had I been long there till I was appointed physician to several Parsee families of great wealth. With but little effort, fortune opened before me. I performed a few surgical operations of considerable difficulty with success. In several desperate cases I effected cures, and my name was spread not only through the city but throughout the island. The riches I went to seek I found. But even then, sir, my heart would turn to your school, and to the happy hours I had spent by the side of Bonny Katie Alison.

However, it would be of no interest to enter into the details of my monotonous life. I shall dwell only upon one incident, which is, of all others, the most remarkable that ever occurred to me, and which took place about six years after my arrival in India. I was in my carriage, and accompanying the remains of a patient to the burial-ground—for you know that doctors cannot cure when Death is determined to have its way. The burial-ground lies about three miles from Bombay, across an extensive and beautiful plain, and the road to it is by a sort of an avenue, lined and shaded on each side by cocoa-trees, which spread their branches over the path, and distil their cooling juice into the cups which the Hindoos have placed around them to receive it. You can form but a faint conception of the clear azure of an Indian sky, and never had I seen it more beautiful than on the day to which I refer, though some of the weather prophets about Bombay were predicting a storm.

We were about the middle of the avenue I have described,

when we overtook the funeral of an officer who had held a commission in a corps of Sepoys. The coffin was carried upon the shoulders of four soldiers; before it marched the Sepoys, and behind it, seated in a palanquin, borne by four Hindoos, came the widow of the deceased. A large black veil thrown over her head almost enveloped her person. Her head was bent upon her bosom, and she seemed to weep bitterly. We followed behind them to the burial-place; but, before the service was half concluded, the heavens were overcast, and a storm, such as I had never witnessed, burst over our heads, and hurled its fury upon the graves. The rain poured down in a fierce and impetuous torrent—but you know not, in this country, what a torrent of rain is. The thunder seemed tearing heaven in twain. It rolled, reverbed, and pealed, and rattled with its tremendous voice over the graves of the dead, as though it were the outbursting of eternity—the first blast of the archangel's trumpet—announcing the coming judgment! The incessant lightnings flashed through the air, like spirits winged with flame, and awakening the dead.

The Sepoys fled in terror, and hastened to the city, to escape the terrible fury of the storm. Even those who had accompanied my friend's body fled with them, before the earth was covered over the dead that they had followed to the grave. But still, by the side of the officer's grave, and unmindful of the storm, stood his poor widow. She refused to leave the spot till the last sod was placed upon her husband's bosom. My heart bled for her. Within three yards from her stood a veteran English sergeant, who, with the Hindoos, that bore her palanquin, were all that remained in the burial-place.

Common humanity prompted me to offer her a place in my carriage back to the city. I inquired of the sergeant who the deceased was. He informed me that he was a young Scotch officer—that his marriage had offended his friends—that they had denounced him in consequence—that he had enlisted—and that the officers of the regiment which he had first joined had procured him an ensigncy in a corps of Sepoys, but that

he had died, leaving a young widow who wept over his grave, a stranger in a strange land. "And," added the sergeant, "a braver fellow never set foot upon the ground."

When the last sod had been placed upon the grave, I respectfully offered to convey her and the young widow. I respectfully offered to the violence of the storm increased.

At my voice she started—she uttered a suppressed scream—she raised her head—she withdrew her handkerchief from her eyes!—I beheld her features!—and, gracious Heaven!—whom, sir!—whom—whom did I see, but my own Katie Alison!"

"Doctor!—doctor!" exclaimed the old dominie, starting from his seat, "what do I hear?"

"I cannot describe to you," continued the other, "the tumultuous joy, combined with agony, the indescribable feelings of that moment. We stood—we gasped—we gazed upon each other; neither of us spoke. I took her hand—I led her to the carriage—I conveyed her to the city!"

"And, oh, doctor, what then?" inquired the dominie.

"Why, sir," said the doctor, "many days passed—many words were spoken—mutual tears were shed for Jamie Johnstone—and bonnie Katie Alison, the lassie of my first love, became my wife, and is the mother of my children. She will be here in a few days, and will see her old dominie."

THE FIRST-FOOT.

NOTWITHSTANDING the shortness of their days, the bitterness of their frosts, and the fury of their storms, December and January are merry months. First comes old Christmas, shaking his hoary locks, belike, in the shape of snowdrift, and laughing, well-pleased, beneath his crown of mistletoe, over the smoking sirloin and the savoury goose.

There is not a child on the south side of the Borders who longs not for the coming of merry Christmas—it is their holiday of holidays—their season of play and of presents, and old and young shake hands with Christmas, and with each other. And even on the northern side of ‘the river,’ and ‘the ideal line by fancy drawn,’ which ‘divide the sister kingdoms,’ there are thousands who welcome and forget not ‘blithe Yule day.’ Next comes the New Year—the bottle, the hot pint, and the *first-foot*—and we might notice, also, Hansel Monday, and ‘Auld Hansel Monday,’ which follow in their wake, and keep up the merriment till the back of January is broken. But our business at present is with the *first-foot*, and we must hold. It matters not on what side of the Borders it may be—and northward the feeling extends far beyond the Border—there is a mysterious, an ominous importance attached to the individual who first crosses the threshold, after the clock has struck twelve at midnight, on the 31st of December, or who is the *first-foot* in a house after the New Year has begun. The *first-foot* stamps the ‘luck’ of the house—the good fortune or the evil fortune of its inmates throughout the year! But to begin with our story. There was not a person on all the Borders, nor yet in all Scotland, who attached more importance to the first-foot, than Nelly Rogers. Nelly was a very worthy, kind-hearted, yea, even sensible sort of woman, but a vein of superstition ran through her sense; she had imbibed a variety of ‘auld world notions’ in infancy, and, as she grew up, they became a part of her creed. She did not exactly believe that ghosts and apparitions existed in her day, but she was perfectly sure they *had* existed, and *had* been seen; she was sure, also, there was something in dreams, and she was positive there was a great deal in the luckiness or unluckiness of a first-foot; she had remarked it in her own experience thirty times, and, she said, ‘it was of nae use attempting to argue her out o’ what she had observed hersel.’ Nelly was the wife of one Richard Rogers, a respectable farmer, whose farmhouse stood by the side of the post-road, between Kelso and Lauder. They had a family of several children; but our

business is with the oldest, who was called George, and who had the misfortune to receive, both from his parents and their neighbours, the character of being a *genius*. This is a very unfortunate character to give to any one who has a fortune to make in the world, as will be seen when we come to notice the history of George the Genius—for such was the appellation by which he was familiarly mentioned. Now, it was the last night of the old year; George was about twelve years of age, and, because he was their first-born, and, moreover, because he was a genius, he was permitted to sit with his father and his mother, and a few friends, who had come to visit them, to see the old year out, and the New Year in. The cuckoo clock struck twelve, and the company rose, shook hands, wished each other a happy new year, and, in a bumper, drank, 'May the year that's awa be the warst o' our lives.'

'I wonder wha will be our first-foot,' said Nelly; 'I hope it will be a lucky ane.' The company began to argue whether there was anything in the luck of a first-foot or not, and the young genius sided with his mother; and, while they yet disputed upon the subject, a knocking was heard at the front door.

'There's somebody,' said Nelly; 'if it's onybody that I think's no lucky I winna let them in.'

'Nonsense,' said Richard.

'It's nae nonsense,' replied Nelly; 'it may be a *flat-soled* body, for anything I ken; and do ye think I wad risk the like o' that. Haud awa, see wha it is, George,' added she, addressing the genius; 'and dinna let them in unless you're sure that they dinna come empty-handed.'

'Did ever ye hear the like o' the woman!' said her husband; 'sic havers! Run awa, George, hinny; open the door.'

The boy ran to the door, and inquired, 'Who's there?'

'A stranger,' was the reply.
'What do ye want?' inquired the genius, with a degree of caution seldom found in persons honoured with such an epithet.

'I have a letter to Master Rogers, from his brother,' answered the stranger.

'A letter frae my brother John!' cried Richard, starting from his seat; 'open the door, laddie; open the door.'

Now, Richard Rogers had a brother, who also had been considered a sort of genius in his youth. He was of a wild and restless disposition in those days, and his acquaintances were wont to call him by the name of Jack the Rambler. But it is a long road that has no turning; he had now been many years at sea; was the captain of a free-trader; and as remarkable for his steadiness and worldly wisdom as he had been noted for the wildness of his youth. There was a mysterious spot in the captain's history, which even his brother Richard had never been able to unriddle. But that spot will be brought to light by-and-by.

George opened the door, and the stranger entered. He was dressed as a seaman; and Nelly drew back and appeared troubled as her eyes fell upon him. It was evident she had set him down in her mind as an unlucky first-foot. He was not, indeed, the most comely personage that one might desire to look upon on a New Year's morning; for he was a squat little fellow, with huge red whiskers that almost buried his face, his burly head was covered with a sou-wester, and his eyes squinted most fearfully. Nelly could not withdraw her eyes from the man's eyes; she contemplated the squint with horror. Such eyes were never in the head of a first-foot before. She was sure that 'something no canny would be the upshot.'

'Tak a seat, sir; tak a seat, sir,' said Richard, addressing the sailor; 'fill out a glass, and mak yoursel at hame. Nelly, bring a clean tumbler. And ye hae a letter frae my brother, the captain, sir?' added he, anxiously; 'who is he? Where is he? When did ye see him?'

'I left him at Liverpool, sir,' replied the queer-looking sailor; 'and, as I intended to take a run down overland to Leith to see my old mother, 'Bill,' says he to me--(for my name's Bill, sir--Bill Somers)—well, as I'm saying, 'Bill,' says he, 'you'll be going past the door of a brother of mine,

and I wish I were going with you'—(and I wish he had, for not to say it before you, sir, there an't a better or a cleverer fellow than Captain Rogers, in the whole service, nor a luckier one either, though, poor fellow, he has had his bad luck too in some things; and it sticks to him still, and will stick to him)—however, as I say, said he to me—'Bill, here is a bit of a letter, give it to my brother—it concerns my nevy, George'—(yes, George, I think he called him). So I took the letter and set off—that is, some days ago—and I arrived at the public-house, a little from this, about four hours since, and intended to cast anchor there for the night; but having taken a glass or two, by way of ballast, I found myself in good sailing trim, and having inquired about you, and finding that you lived but a short way off, and that the people in the house said, it being New Year's times, you wouldn't be moored yet, I desired the landlady to fill me up half a gallon, or so, of her best rum, that I mightn't come empty-handed—for that wouldn't be lucky, ma'am, I reckon," added he, squinting in the face of Mrs. Rogers, who looked now at his eyes, and now at a large bottle, which he drew from beneath a sort of half greatcoat or monkey-jacket. Nelly was no friend to spirit-drinking; nevertheless, she was glad that her first-foot, though he did squint, had not come empty-handed.

The letter was handed to Mr. Rogers, who, having broke the seal—"Preserve us, Richard!" said Nelly, "that's a lang epistle! I dare say the captain's made his will in't—what does he say?"

"It's a kind, sensible, weel-written letter," said Richard, "for John was a genius a' his days; and there is mair about a will in't than ye're aware o'. But there's nae secret in it. George will read it."

The letter was then given to the genius, who read as follows:—

"DEAR DICK,—As one of my crew, Bill Somers, who has sailed with me for a dozen years, is going down to Scotland, and will pass your way, I take the opportunity of writing to you, and letting you know that I am as well as a person, who has as much

cause to be unhappy as I have, can desire to be. The cause of that unhappiness you don't know, and few know it—but I do, and that's enough. I have made some money—perhaps a good deal—but that's of no consequence. I once thought that I might have *them* of my own flesh and blood to inherit it; however, that was not to be. It is a long story, and a sad story—one that you know nothing about, and which it is of no use to tell you about now. As things are, my nevy, George, is to be heir to whatever money, goods, and chattels I possess."

As her son read this Nelly thought that it was nonsense, after all, to say that a squint first-foot was unlucky.

"Read on, George," said his father, "and take heed to what your uncle says."

The boy resumed the letter, and again read—

"Now, as my nevy is to be my heir, I think it my duty to lay down a sort of chart—or call it what you like—by which I would wish him to shape his future conduct. I am glad to hear that his head is of the right sort; but let us have none of your fiddle ornaments about it. A lofty prow is not always the best for a storm, and looks bad enough with a Dutch stern. Beware, also, how you let him to sea before his vessel is fairly rigged, caulked, and water-proof—or, if you do, then look out for his growing top-heavy, and capsizing in the turn of a handspike. If you set him off with a bare allowance of ballast, and without a single letter of credit—do you expect him to bring home a cargo? It is stuff, Dick—arrant stuff! All your boy exhibitions are downright swindling. Prodigies, forsooth!—why, parrots can speak, and jackdaws chatter. Or, to render myself intelligible to your agricultural senses, a tree blossoms in its first year, and a selfish deluded idiot plucks it up, exhibits it in the market-place—the bud perishes, and the tree withers, while gaping lubbers wonder that it did not bear fruit! Now, Dick, this is exactly the case with all your fast-sailing miracles. Give a boy the helm, and get him to the drudgery of the cabin again, if you can.

"As to his love affairs, provided the girl of his choice be virtuous, and tolerably pretty—though neither very rich nor very intelligent—see that you don't strike off at a tangent, and, like one of your own stupid cattle, run counter to his will. If you do, it will only hasten what you wish to prevent—or render a marriage certain, which the young couple thought sufficiently doubtful. Besides, your opposi-

tion might spoil a poor girl's reputation; and I have always found that imputations of a certain class upon a man are like marks left upon the sand within a tide-mark; but to a woman—a lovely, helpless woman—they adhere like a limpet to the rock. Besides this, Dick, I am certain the most powerful impression of moral rectitude you can imprint upon his heart will be like a pistol fired from a cock-boat, compared to the glorious and irresistible broadside of a seventy-four, when you contrast its influence upon his actions, with the delightful and conquering emotions of love and esteem which he entertains for an amiable woman. Don't preach to me, Dick, for I know when the devil, the world, and the flesh, war against our better principles; and when early instructions, counsels, and those sort of things, are fairly run down and drop astern. Why, if a fellow just think for a moment of the beautiful being whose soul is as pure as the blue sea on a summer day—if he just think of her—or of her last words—'*Don't forget me!*'—Belay! is the word—about goes the helm—head round from the lee-shore of inconsistency, and he is again quietly moored in the fair-way of virtue.

"When he begins to shape into manhood, *Discretion* is the watchword; and whatever he or others may think of his abilities, let him douse *Presumption* and stow it below, hoist a *desire to please* at the fore-top, place *Perseverance* at the helm, and *Civility* and *Moderate Ambition* upon the watch. People say they like a plain-spoken, honest fellow, who says what he thinks. But it is all a fudge. Just speak in a jack-blunt manner, which they praise, respecting themselves, and, mark me, they will march off to another tune. Let any man practice this for a time, and he will soon be hated by every soul on board. I don't mean to advise dissimulation, but a man can get enemies enough without making them; therefore, where he has no good to say of a person, though they may have injured him, let him hold his tongue.

"Another thing, and an important one, for him to remember is—he who is the king of good fellows, and a 'good soul' amongst his associates, is styled by the public a thoughtless man, and by his enemies a drunkard. Now, Dick, in the world of business, a *good fellow* simply means a *good-for-nothing*. Therefore, see to it, and put my nevy on the look-out; for, not to speak of the growing influence of habit, just attribute unsteadiness to a man and you bring him a wind ahead—stop his credit, and hurl him to ruin headlong. Sobriety is his compass—sobriety is his pass-

"Again, Dick, I would neither wish to see him a booby nor a

maw-worm: but I must tell you that the opinion the world forms of us is often cast upon very trivial circumstances. A heedlessly committed action, which we forget in half an hour, others will remember to our disadvantage for twelve months. There is nothing like being well-braced with circumspection; let him always look well to his bearing and distance, or he will soon find himself out in his latitude. No man of any ambition, or whether he was ambitious or not, ever loved a man who presumed to be in all things wiser than himself. I don't wish to lecture upon humbug humility, but diffidence and good-breeding should never be under the poop. Let him take heed, also, how he dabbles in politics or religion. Both concern him, and he must think and act upon both; but he must do so as becomes a man. I hate all your noisy boatswain politicians, both aboard the Commons and out of it. The moment I see a lubberly fellow swinging his arms about and blowing a hurricane, whether he be endeavouring to blow a nation or a tavern in agitation—there rages a grand rascal, say I; his patriotism, and the froth which he scatters from his mouth, are of a piece. Now, as to his religious principles, of all things, let him keep them to himself. Every man is as much in the right, in his own estimation, as he is. Nothing will procure a man more enemies than a real or affected singularity in matters of religion. For though there is a great deal of good sense afloat in the world, yet there is such a fry of feverish, canting small craft always skulking about, and peeping into our *pees* and *ques*, which, though they cannot sink your character, they annoy it with their sparrow-hail. In a word, Dick, every intelligent being's religion lies between his own conscience and his Maker. Give my nevy a Bible, with a father's best blessing—in it he will find the ennobling hopes of eternity, and learn to do unto others as he would wish others to do unto him; and this, from the bottom of my heart, is the advice of his uncle Jack.

“A sterling, upright, moral character is absolutely indispensable. If the heart be well built, and kept in good sailing-trim, he will have a tell-tale there which will keep all right aloft. As well set a seaman upon a voyage of discovery without a compass as a young fellow upon the world without a character. But, d'ye see, because you can't go to sea without a compass of this kind, you are not to expect that, in all cases, it will insure you of reaching the Pole. No, Dick, it is rather like a pilot sent out to steer you in, when you are within sight of land, and without whose assistance you cannot reach the port.

"In conversation, too, I hate to see a smooth-water puppy running at the rate of twelve knots, as if no vessel in the fleet could sail but his own. I have seen fellows of this sort showing off like gilded pinnaces at a regatta, while they were only showing how little they had on board. Two things, in particular, I wish my nevy to avoid—namely, argufying in company, and speaking about himself. There is a time and a place for everything; and, though argument be well enough in its way, he who is always upon the look-out for one is just as sure as he finds it to find an enemy; and, as to speaking of one's self, independent of its ill-breeding, it is like a dose of salt-water served round the company. The grand secret of conversation is, to say little, in a way to please, and the moment you fail to do so, it is time to shove your boat off. Whenever you see a person yawn in your company take your hat.

"Independent of these things, let him look well to his tidetable. Without punctuality the best character becomes a bad one. The moment a man breaks his word, or becomes indifferent to his engagement, why, the confidence of his commodore is at an end; and, instead of being promoted to the quarter-deck, he may slave before the mast till the boatswain's last whistle pipe all hands to his funeral. Punctuality, Dick—systematical, methodical punctuality—is a fortune to a fellow ready-made. Let him once listen to the syren voice of delay—neglect to weigh anchor with the tide, and if he don't drift back with the current, go to pieces on a sand-bank, or be blown to sticks by a foul wind, my name's not Jack. Let him keep a sharp eye upon the beginning, the middle, and the end of everything he undertakes. He must not tack about, like a fellow on a cruise or a roving commission, but, whatever wind blows, maintain a straight course, keeping his head to the port. Burns, the poet, spoke like a philosopher when he said it was the misfortune of his life to be without an aim. But I tell you what, Dick, we must not only have an object to steer to, but it must be a reasonable object. A madman may say he is determined to go to the North Pole, or the moon—but that's not the thing, Dick; our anticipations must be likelihoods, our ambitions probabilities; but when we have made frequent calculations, and find ourselves correct in our reckoning, though we have made but little way, then down with despondency, and stick to perseverance. I don't mean a beggarly, servile, grovelling perseverance, but the unsubdued determination of an unconquerable spirit, riding out the storm, and while small craft sink on every side, disdaining to take in a single reef.

"Now, having said this much about shaping his course and laying in a freight, it is material that I drop a concluding word with regard to his rigging. Send him out with patched canvas, and the veriest punt that ever disgraced the water will clear out before him. A patch upon his coat will be an embargo on his prospects. People affect to despise tailors; but it is base ingratitude or shallow dissimulation. Not that I would for the world see my nevy an insignificant dandy, but remember, the moment the elbows of your coat open every door shuts.

"But my fingers are cramped with this long epistle, and, moreover, the paper is full; and with love to my nevy George, Nelly, and the little ones, I am, dear Dick,

"Your affectionate Brother,

"JOHN ROGERS,

"Otherwise,

"JACK THE RAMBLER."

All applauded this letter when they heard it, and they vowed the captain was a clever fellow—a noble fellow—ay, and a wise one; and they drank his health and a happy New Year to him, though half of what he had written, from his nautical types and symbols, was as Greek and Latin unto those who heard it, and worse unto George the genius, who read it; though some parts of it all understood.

When the health of Captain Rogers had gone round, "I wonder in the world," said Richard, "what it can be that my brother aye refers to about being unhappy? I've written to him fifty times to try to fathom it, but I never could—he never would gie me ony satisfaction."

"Why," said the seaman, as he sat leaning forward and turning round his sou-wester between his knees, "I believe I know, or I can guess a something about the matter. It's about ten years ago, according to my reckoning, we were coming down the Mediterranean, the captain was as fine a looking young fellow then as ever stood upon a deck. Well, as I was saying, we were coming down the Mediterranean, and at Genoa we took a gentleman and his daughter on board. She was a pretty creature; I've seen nothing like her neither before nor since. So, as I'm telling you, we took

them on board at Genoa, for England, and they had not been many days on board till every one saw, and I saw, though my eyes are none o' the smartest, that the captain could look on nothing but his lovely passenger. It wasn't hard to see that she looked much in the same way at him, and I have seen them walking on the deck at night with her arm through his, in the moonlight; and, let me tell you, a glorious sight it is—moonlight on the Mediterranean. It is enough to make a man fall in love with moonlight itself, if there be nothing else beside him. Well, d'ye see, as I am saying, it wasn't long until the old gentleman, her father, saw which way the land lay; and one day we heard the lady weeping; she never came out of her cabin during the rest of the voyage, nor did her father again speak to the master. We were laid up for a long time, and there was a report that the captain and her had married, unknowing to her father. However, we sailed on a long voyage; and we weren't back to England again for more than twelve months; but the day after we landed the captain shut himself up, and, for long and long, we used to find him sitting with the salt water in his eyes. We again heard the report that he had been married, and also that his lady had died in child-bed; but whether the child was living, or ever was living, or whether it was a boy or a girl, we didn't know; nor did he know; and, I believe, he never was able to hear any more about the old gentleman—so, as I say, that's all I know about the matter, poor fellow."

Now, the squinting sailor remained two days in the house of Richard Rogers, and he was such a comical man, and such a good-natured, kind-hearted man, that Mrs. Rogers was certain he would be a lucky first-foot, even though he had a very unfortunate cross look with his eyes; and she was the more convinced in this opinion because, in a conversation she had had with him, and in which she had inquired—"What siller he thought the captain might be worth?"—"Why, I'm saying," answered the sailor, "Captain Rogers is worth a round twenty thousand, if he be worth a single penny; and that, I'm thinking, is a pretty comfortable thing

for Master George to be heir to ! ” “ Ay, and so it is, ” responded Nelly. And there was no longer anything disagreeable in the sailor’s squint.

Well, week followed week, and month succeeded month—spring came, and summer came, and harvest followed, and it was altogether a lucky year to Richard Rogers. Nelly declared that the squinting sailor had been an excellent first-foot.

Another year came, another, and another, until eight years passed round since they had been visited by the outlandish seaman. Nelly had had both lucky and unlucky first-feet. George the genius was now a lad of twenty, and the other children were well-grown—but George was still a genius, and nothing but a genius. He was indeed a good scholar—a grand scholar, as his mother declared—and a great one as his father affirmed. He had been brought up to no profession, for it was of no use thinking of a profession for one who was heir to twenty thousand pounds ; and, at any rate, his genius was sure to make him a fortune. In what way his genius was to do this was never taken into consideration. Many people said, “ If we had your genius, George, we could make a fortune. ” And George thought he would and could. The joiner in the next village, however, said, that “ Wi’ a’ George’s genius he didna believe he could make an elshin-heft, and stick him ! and, in his opinion, there was mair to be made by making elshin-hefts than by writing ballants ! ”

As I have said, eight years had passed round ; it was again the last night of the year, and a very dark and stormy night it was. Mr. Rogers, his wife, their son George, and the rest of their family, had again seen the old year out and the new year in, and exchanged with each other the compliments of the season, when the cuckoo-clock again announced the hour of twelve. Nelly had “ *happed* up the fire ” with her own hands—a thing that she always did on the last night of the old year, that it might not be out on a New Year’s morning. She was again wondering who would be their first-foot, and expressing a hope that it would be a lucky one, when a chaise drew up before the house, and the driver, dismounting

and knocking at the window, begged that they would favour him with a light, as the roads were exceedingly dark, and the lamps of the chaise had been blown out by the wind.

"A light!" exclaimed Nelly, half petrified at the request; "preserve us! is the man beside himsel'!—do ye imagine that onybody is gaun to gie ye out a light the first thing in a New Year's morning! Gae awa!—gae awa!"

In vain the driver expostulated—he had met with similar treatment at other houses at which he had called. "Ye hae nae business to travel at siccan a time o' night," replied Nelly to all his arguments. Her husband said little, for he entertained some of his wife's scruples against giving a light at such a time. George mildly ridiculed the absurdity of the refusal; but—"I am mistress o' my ain house," answered his mother, "and I'll gie a light out o't when I please, and only when I please. Wi'a' yer learnin', George, ye wad be a great fool sometimes."

The voice of a lady was now heard at the window with the driver, saying, "Pray, good people, do permit us to light the lamps, and you shall have any recompense." No sooner did George hear the lady's voice than, in despite of his mother's frowns, he sprang to the door and unlocked it. With an awkward sort of gallantry he ushered in the fair stranger. She was, indeed, the loveliest first-foot that had ever crossed the threshold of Mrs. Rogers. She had no sooner entered than Nelly saw and felt this, and, with a civility which formed a strange contrast to her answers to the driver, she smoothed down for her the cushioned arm-chair by the side of the fire. The young lady (for she hardly appeared to exceed seventeen) politely declined the proffered hospitality. "Sit down, my sweet young leddy; now, do sit down just to oblige me," said Nelly. "Ye are our first-foot, and I hope—I'm sure ye'll be a lucky ane; and ye wouldna, ye canna gaun out without tasting wi' us on a New Year's morning."

The young lady sat down; and Nelly hastened to spread upon the table little mountains of short bread (of which she was a notable maker), with her spice loaf, milk-scones, and

her best ewe-cheese, and her cream-cheese, which was quite a fancy ! And while his mother was so occupied George produced three or four sorts of home-made wine of his own manufacture ; for, in his catalogue of capabilities as a genius, it must be admitted that he had some which might be said to belong to the useful.

“ Now, make yoursel’ at hame, my dear leddy,” said Nelly ; “ need nae pressing. Or if ye wad like it better, I’ll get ye ready a cup o’ tea in a minute or twa : the kettle’s boiling : and it’s only to mask, so dinna say no. Indeed, if ye’ll only consent to stop a’ night, ye shall hae the best bed in the house, and we’ll put the horses in the stable ; for it’s no owre and aboon lucky to gie or tak a light on a New Year’s morning.”

A faint smile played across the lips of the fair stranger at the mixture of Nelly’s kindness and credulity ; and she thanked her for her hospitality, but stated that she must proceed on her journey, as she was hastening to the death-bed of a near and only relative. The young lady, however, sat longer than she wist, for she had entered into conversation with George—how, she knew not, and he knew not ; but they were pleased with each other ; and there were times (though it was only at times) that George could talk like an inspired being ; and this was one of those times. The knowledge, the youth, the beauty of the lovely stranger had kindled all the fires of his genius within him. Even his father was surprised, and his mother forgot that the chaise-driver was lighting the lamps ; and how long the fair lady might have listened to George we cannot tell, had not the driver hinted, “ All’s ready, ma’am ; the horses will get no good in the cold.” She arose and took leave of her entertainers ; and George accompanied her to the chaise and shook her hand and bade her farewell, as though she had been an old and a very dear friend. He even thought, as she replied, “ *Farewell*,” that there was a sadness in her tone, as if she were sorry to say it.

Richard and his spouse retired to rest ; but still the thought of having given a light out of her house on a New

Year's morning troubled her, and she feared that, after all, her lovely first-foot would prove an unlucky one. George laid his head upon his pillow to dream dreams, and conjure up visions of the fair stranger.

A short week had not passed, however, Richard was returning from Kelso market, the roads were literally a sheet of ice—it is said that bones are most easily broken in frosty weather—his horse fell and rolled over him, and he was carried home bruised, and with his leg broken. Nelly was loud in her lamentations, and yet louder in her upbraidings against George and against herself that she permitted a light to be carried out of her house on a New Year's morning. "It was born in upon me," said she, "the leddy wadna be lucky, that something would come out o' the giein' the light!" But this was not all; before two months elapsed, and just as her husband was beginning to set his foot to the ground again, from friction and negligence together the thrashing machine took fire. It was still a severe frost, there was scarce a drop of water to be procured about the place, and, in spite of the exertions of all the people on the farm, and their neighbours who came to their assistance, the fierce flames roared, spread and rushed from stack to stack, until the barn, the stables, the stack-yard, and the dwelling-house presented a heap of smouldering ashes and smoking ruins. Yet this was not the worst evil which had that day fallen upon Richard Rogers. He was one of those individuals who have an aversion to the very name of a bank, and he had the savings and the profits of twenty years—in fifty pound notes, and in five pound notes, and crown pieces—locked away in a strong drawer in his bedroom. In the confusion of the fire, and as he bustled, halting about, with the hope of saving some of his wheat-stacks (for wheat was selling high at the time), he forgot the strong drawer and his twenty years' savings, until flames were seen bursting from the window of his bedroom. The window had been left open, and some of the burning materials having been blown into the room, it was the first part of the house which caught fire.

"Oh! I'm ruined!—I'm ruined!" cried Richard; "my siller!—my siller!—my hard-won siller!"

A rush was made to the bedroom; but before they reached it the stairs gave way, the floor fell in, and a thick flame and suffocating smoke buried the fruits of poor Richard's industry—the treasure which he had laid up for his children.

"Now I am beggar!" groaned he, lifting up his hands, while the flames almost scorched his face.

"Oh, black sorrow take that leddy!" cried Nelly, wringing her hands; "what tempted her to be my first-foot—or what tempted me to gie her a light! George! George! it was a' you! We gied fire out o' the house, and now we've brought it about us! Waes me! waes me! I'm a ruined woman! O Richard! what will we do? what was ye thinking about that ye didna mind the siller?"

Richard knew nothing of the number of his notes, and his riches had, indeed, vanished in a flash of fire! He was now obliged to take shelter with his family in an out-house, which had been occupied by a cotter. He had not heard from Captain Rogers for more than twelve months, and he knew not where he was, therefore he could expect no immediate assistance from him. It was now necessary that George should bring his genius into action—his father could no longer support him in idleness; and as it had always been said that he had only to exert his genius to make a fortune, George resolved that he would exert it, and he was pleased with the thought of setting his father on his feet again by the reward of his talents. He had read somewhere in the writings of Dr. Johnson (and the Doctor had a good deal of experience in the matter), that "genius was *sure* to meet with its reward in London;" and, if the Doctor was *sure* of that, George was as *sure* that he was a genius, and therefore he considered the reward as certain. So George determined, as his uncle might live many years, that he would go to London and make a fortune for himself, and to assist his father in the meantime. A cow was taken to Kelso market and sold for eight pounds, and the money was given

to George to pay his expenses to the metropolis, and to keep him there until his genius should put him in the way of making the anticipated fortune. His coat was not exactly such a one as his uncle desired he should be sent out into the world in—not that it was positively a bad coat, but it was beginning to be rather smooth and clear about the elbows, a lighter shade ran up on each side of the seams at the back, and his hat was becoming bare round the edges on the crown. To be sure, as his mother said, “he would aye hae ink beside him, and a dip o’ ink would help to hide that.” These, however, were things that could not be mended—the wardrobe of the whole family had been consumed at the fire; but these things did not distress George, for he did not consider it necessary for a genius to appear in a new coat. There were many tears shed on both sides when George bade adieu to his father, his mother, and his brethren, and took his journey towards London.

It was about the middle of March when he arrived in the metropolis; and, having spent two days wandering about and wondering at all he saw, without once thinking how his genius was to make the long-talked-of fortune, on the third day he delivered a letter of introduction, which he had received, to a broker in the city. Now, it so happened, that in this letter poor George was spoken of as an “*extraordinary genius!*”

“So you are a *great genius*, young man, my friend informs me,” said the broker; “what have you a genius for?”

George blushed and looked confused; he almost said—“for everything;” but he hung down his head and said nothing.

“Is it a genius for making machines—or playing the fiddle—or what?” added the broker.

George looked more and more confused; he replied—“that he could neither make machines, nor did he know anything of music?”

“Then I hope it’s not a genius for making ballads, is it?” continued the other.

“I have written ballads,” answered George, hesitatingly.

"Oh, then you must try the West-end—you won't do for the city," added the broker; "your genius is an article that's not in demand here."

George left the office of the London citizen mortified and humiliated. For a dozen long years everybody had told him he was a genius; and now, when the question was put to him—"What had he a genius for?" he could not answer it. This rebuff rendered him melancholy for several days, and he wandered from street to street, sometimes standing, unconscious of what he was doing, before the window of a bookseller, till, jostled by the crowd, he moved on, and again took his stand before the window of the printseller, the jeweller, or the vendor of caricatures. Still he believed that he was a genius, and he was conscious that that genius might make him a fortune; only he knew not how to apply it—he was puzzled where to begin. Yet he did not despair. He thought the day would come—but how it was to come, he knew not. He took out his uncle's letter, which his father put into his hands when he left him, and he read it again, and said, it was all very good, but what was he the better of it?"—it was all very true—too true, for he understood every word of it now; and he turned round his arm and examined his coat with a sigh, and beheld that the lining was beginning to show its unwelcome face through the seams of the elbows. I should have told you that he was then sitting in a coffee-house, sipping his three half-pence worth of coffee, and *kitchening* his pennyworth of bread, which was but half a slice, slightly buttered—and a thin slice, too, compared with those of his mother's cutting. He was beginning to feel one of the first rewards of genius—*eating by measure*! To divert the melancholy of his feelings, and the gloom of his prospects, he took up a magazine which lay on the table before him. His eyes fell upon the review of a poem which had been lately published, and for which the author was said to have received a thousand guineas! "*A thousand guineas!*" exclaimed George, dropping the magazine, "*A thousand guineas!* I shall make a fortune yet!" He had read some of the

extracts from the poem—he was sure he could write better lines—his eyes flashed with ecstasy—his very nostrils distended with delight—a thousand guineas seemed already in his pocket! Though, alas! out of the eight pounds which he had received as the price of his father's cow, with all his management and with all his economy, he had but eight shillings left. But his resolution was taken—he saw fortune hovering over him with her golden wings—he purchased a quire of paper and half a dozen quills, and hurried to his garret—for his lodging *was* a garret, in which there was nothing but an old bed and an older chair—not even an apology for a table—but sometimes the bed served the purpose of one, and at other times he sat upon the floor like a Turk, and wrote upon the chair. He was resolved to write an epic—for the idea of a thousand guineas had taken possession of all his faculties. He made a pen—he folded the paper—he rubbed his hands across his brow for a subject. He might have said with Byron (had Byron then said it),

“I want a hero!”

He thought of a hundred subjects, and with each the idea of his mother's beautiful but most unlucky first-foot was mingled! At length he fixed upon one, and began to write. He wrote most industriously—in short, he wrote for a thousand guineas! He tasked himself to four hundred lines a day, and, in a fortnight, he finished a poem containing about five thousand. It was longer than that for which the thousand guineas had been given; but George thought, though he should get no more for his, that even a thousand guineas was very good payment for a fortnight's labour. Of the eight shillings which we mentioned his being in possession of when he began the epic he had now but three-pence, and he was in arrears for the week's rent of his garret. The landlady began to cast very suspicious glances at her lodger—she looked at him with the sides of her eyes. She did not know exactly what a genius meant, but she had proof positive it did not mean a gentleman. At times, also, she would stand with his garret-door in her hand, as if she

intended to say, "Mr. Rogers, I would thank you for last week's rent."

Scarce was the ink dry upon the last page of his poem when George, folding up the manuscript, put it carefully into his coat-pocket, and hurried to the bookseller of whom he had read that he had given a thousand guineas for a shorter work, and one too that, he was satisfied in his own mind, was every way inferior to his. We do not say that he exactly expected the publisher to fall down and worship him the moment he read the first page of his production, but he did believe that he would regard him as a prodigy, and at once offer terms for the copyright. He was informed by a shopman, however, that the publisher was engaged, and he left the manuscript, stating that he would call again. George did call again, and yet again, trembling with hope and anxiety; and he began to discover that a great London publisher was as difficult of access as his imperial mightiness the Emperor of China. At length, by accident, he found the bibliopole in his shop. He gave a glance at George—it was a withering glance—a glance at his coat and at his elbows. The unfortunate genius remembered, when it was too late, the passage in his uncle's letter, "the moment the elbows of your coat open, every door shuts." We have already mentioned that the lining was beginning to peer through them, and, during the fervour of inspiration, or the *furor* of excitement in composing the epic, he had not observed that the rent had become greater, that the lining too had given way, and that now his linen (which was not of a snow colour) was visible. He inquired after his manuscript. "What is it?" asked the publisher.

"A poem," answered George—"an epic!" The man of books smiled—he gave another look at the forlorn visage of the genius—it was evident he measured the value of his poetry by the value of his coat. "A poem!" replied he—"poetry's a drug!" It is of no use for such as you to think about writing poetry. Give the young man his manuscript," said he to the shopman, and walked away.

The reader may imagine the feelings of our disappointed

genius—they were bitter as the human soul could bear. Yet he did not altogether despair; there were more book-sellers in London. It is unnecessary to tell how he offered his manuscript to another and another, yea, to twenty more—how he examined what books they had published in their windows—and how he entered their shops with fear and trembling, for his hopes were becoming fainter and more faint. Some opened it, others did not, but all shook their heads and said—nobody would undertake to publish poetry, or that it was not in their way; some advised him to publish by subscription, but George Rogers did not know a soul in London; others recommended him to try the magazines. It was with a heavy heart that he abandoned the idea of publishing his epic, and with it also his fond dream of obtaining a thousand guineas. He had resolved within himself that the moment he received the money he would go down to Scotland and rebuild his father's house; and all who knew him should marvel and hold up their hands at the fame and the fortune of George the Genius. But a hungry man cannot indulge in day-dreams, and his visions by night are an aggravation of his misery; he therefore had to renounce the fond delusion, that he might have bread to eat. His last resource was to try the magazines. His epic was out of the question for them, and he wrote songs, odes, essays, and short tales, on every scrap of paper, and on the back of every letter in his possession. With his bundle of "shreds and patches," he waited upon several magazine publishers. One told him he was overstocked with contributions; another, that he might leave the papers, and he should have an answer in two or three weeks. But three weeks was an eternity to a man who had not tasted food for three days. A third said "he could seldom make room for new contributors—poetry was not an article for which he gave money—essays were at a discount, and he only published tales by writers of established reputation." There was one article, however, which pleased him, and he handed George a guinea for it. The tears started into his eyes as he received it—he thought he would never be poor

again—he was as proud of that guinea as if it had been a thousand! It convinced him more and more that he *was* a genius. I need not tell how that guinea was husbanded, and how it was doled out; but although George reckoned that it would purchase two hundred and fifty-two penny loaves—and that that was almost as many as a man need to eat in a twelvemonth—yet the guinea vanished to the last penny before a month went round.

He had frequently called at the shop of his first patron, the publisher of the Magazine; and one day when he so called—"O Mr. Rogers," said the bookseller, "I have just heard of a little job which will suit you. Lord L— wishes me to find him a person to write a pamphlet in defence of the war. You are just the person to do it. Make it pungent and peppery, and it will be five or ten guineas for you, and perhaps the patronage of his lordship—and you know no bookseller will look at genius without patronage."

A new light broke upon George—he discovered why his epic had been rejected. He hurried to his garret. He began the pamphlet with the eagerness of frenzy. It was both peppery and passionate. Before the afternoon of the following day it was completed, and he flew with it to the house of the nobleman. Our genius was hardly, as the reader may suppose, in a fitting garb for the drawing-room or library of a British peer, and the pampered menial who opened the door attempted to dash it back in his face. He, however, neither lacked spirit nor strength, and he forced his way into the lobby.

"Inform his lordship," said George, "that Mr. Rogers has called with the pamphlet in Defence of the War!" And he spoke this with an air of consequence and authority.

The man of genius was ushered into the library of the literary lord, who, raising his glass to his eye, surveyed him from head to foot with a look partaking of scorn and disgust; and there was no mistaking that its meaning was—"Stand back!" At length he desired our author to remain where he was, and to read his manuscript. The chagrin which he felt at this reception marred the effect of the first two or

three sentences, but, as he acquired his self-possession, he read with excellent feeling and emphasis. Every sentence told. "Good! good!" said the peer, rubbing his hands—"that will do!—excellent!—give me the manuscript!"

George was stepping boldly forward to the chair of his lordship, when the latter, rising, stretched his arm at its extreme length across the table, and received the manuscript between his finger and thumb, as though he feared contagion from the touch of the author, or fancied that the plague was sewed up between the seams of his threadbare coat. The peer glanced his eye over the title-page, which George had not read—*A Defence of the War with France*," said he; "by—by who!—the deuce!—George Rogers!—who is George Rogers?"

"I am, your lordship," answered the author.

"You are!—you!" said his lordship, "you the author of *the Defence*? Impertinent fool! had not you the idea from me? Am not I to pay for it? The work is mine!" So saying, he rang the bell, and addressing the servant who entered, added—"Give that gentleman a guinea."

George withdrew in rage and bewilderment, and his poverty, not his will, consented to accept the insulting remuneration. Within two days he saw at the door of every bookseller a placard with the words—"Just Published, A DEFENCE OF THE WAR WITH FRANCE, by the Right Hon. Lord L——." George compared himself to Esau, who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage—he had bartered his name, his fame, and the fruits of his genius, for a paltry guinea.

He began to be ashamed of the shabbiness of his garments—the withering meaning of the word clung round him—he felt it as a festering sore eating into his very soul, and he appeared but little upon the streets. He had been several weeks without a lodging, and though it was now summer, the winds of heaven afford but a comfortless blanket for the shoulders when the midnight dews fall upon the earth. He had slept for several nights in a hay-field in the suburbs, on the Kent side of the river; and his custom was, to lift a few armfuls aside on a low rick, and laying himself down in the

midst of it, gradually placing the hay over his feet, and the rest of his body, until the whole was covered. But the hay season did not last for ever; and one morning, when fast asleep in the middle of the rick, he was roused by a sudden exclamation of mingled horror and astonishment. He looked up, and beside him stood a countryman, with his mouth open, and his eyes gazing wistfully. In his hand he held a hayfork, and on the prongs of the fork was one of the skirts of poor George's coat! He gazed angrily at the countryman, and ruefully at the fragment of his unfortunate coat; and, rising, he drew round the portion of it that remained on his back, to view "the rent the envious *hayfork* made."

"By goam! chap," said the countryman, when he regained his speech, "I have made thee a spencer! but I might have run the fork through thee, and it would have been no blame of mine."

They were leading the hay from the field, and the genius was deprived of his lodging. It was some nights after this, he was wandering in the neighbourhood of Poplar, fainting and exhausted—sleeping, starting, dreaming—as he dragged his benumbed and wearied limbs along; and, as he was crossing one of the bridges over the canal, he saw one of the long fly-boats, which ply with goods to Birmingham and Manchester, lying below it. George climbed over the bridge and dropped into the boat, and finding a quantity of painted sailcloth near the head of the boat, which was used as a covering for the goods, to protect them from the weather, he wrapped himself up in it, and lay down to sleep. How long he lay he knew not, for he slept most soundly; and when he awoke, he felt more refreshed than he had been for many nights. But he started as he heard the sound of voices near him; and, cautiously withdrawing the canvas from over his face, he beheld that the sun was up; and, to increase his perplexity, fields, trees, and hedges were gliding past him. While he slept, the boatmen had put the horses to the barge, and were now on their passage to Birmingham, and several miles from London; but though they had passed and re-passed the roll of canvas, they saw not, and they suspected

not, that they "carried Cæsar and his fortunes." George speedily comprehended his situation; and extricating his limbs from the folds of the canvas as quietly as he could, he sprang to his feet, stepped to the side of the boat, and, with a desperate bound, reached the bank of the canal.

"Hullo!" shouted the astonished boatmen. "Hullo! what have you been after?"

George made no answer, but ran with his utmost speed down the side of the canal.

"Hullo! stop thief!—stop thief!" bellowed the boatmen; and, springing to the ground, they gave chase to the genius. The boys, also, who rode the horses that dragged the boat, unlinked them and joined in the pursuit. It was a noble chase! But when George found himself pursued, he left the side of the canal, and took to the fields, clearing hedge, ditch, fence, and stone wall, with an agility that would have done credit to a first-rate hunter. The horses were at fault in following his example, and the boys gave up the chase; and when the boatmen had pursued him for the space of half a mile, finding they were losing ground at every step, they returned, panting and breathless, to their boat. George, however, slackened his pace but little until he arrived at the Edgware road, and there he resumed his wonted slow and melancholy saunter, and sorrowfully returned towards London. He now, poor fellow, sometimes shut his eyes to avoid the sight of his own shadow, which he seemed to regard as a caricature of his forlorn person; and, in truth, he now appeared miserably forlorn—I had almost said ludicrously so. His coat has been already mentioned, with its wounded elbows, and imagine it now with the skirt which had been torn away with the hayfork, when the author of an epic was nearly forked upon a cart as he reposed in a bundle of hay—imagine now the coat with that skirt awkwardly pinned to it—fancy also that the button-holes had become useless, and that all the buttons, save two, had taken leave of his waistcoat—his trousers, also, were as smooth at the knees as though they had been glazed and hot-pressed, and they were so bare, so very bare, that the knees could almost be

seen through them without spectacles. Imagine, also, that this suit had once been black, and that it had changed colours with the weather, the damp hay, the painted canvas, and the cold earth on which he slept; and, add to this, a hat, the brim of which was broken, and the crown fallen in—with shoes, the soles of which had departed, and the heels involuntarily bent down, as if ready to perform the service of slippers. Imagine these things, and you have a personification of George Rogers, as he now wended his weary way towards London.

He had reached the head of Oxford Street, and he was standing irresolute whether to go into the city or turn into the Park, to hide himself from the eyes of man, and to lie down in solitude with his misery, when a lady and a gentleman crossed the street to where he stood. Their eyes fell upon him—the lady started—George beheld her, and he started too—he felt his heart throb, and a blush burn over his cheek. He knew her at the first glance—it was the fair stranger—his mother's first-foot! He turned round—he hurried towards the Park—he was afraid—he was ashamed to look behind him. A thousand times had he wished to meet that lady again, and now he had met her, and he fled from her—the shame of his habiliments entered his soul. Still he heard footsteps behind him, and he quickened his pace. He had entered the Park, but yet he heard the sound of the footsteps following.

"Stop, young man!" cried a voice from behind him. But George walked on as though he heard it not. The word "stop!" was repeated; but, instead of doing so, he was endeavouring to hurry onward, when, as we have said, one of the shoes which had become slippers, and which were bad before, but worse from his flight across the ploughed fields, came off, and he was compelled to stop and stoop, to put it again upon his foot, or to leave his shoe behind him. While he stopped, therefore, to get the shoe again upon his foot, the person who followed him came up—it was the gentleman whom he had seen with the fair unknown. With difficulty he obtained a promise from George that he

would call upon him at his house in Pimlico in the afternoon; and when he found our genius too proud to accept of money, he thrust into the pocket of the memorable skirt, which the hayfork had torn from the parent cloth, all the silver which he had upon his person.

When the gentleman had left him George burst into tears. They were tears of pride, of shame, and of agony.

At length he took the silver from the pocket of his skirt; he counted it in his hand—it amounted to nearly twenty shillings. Twenty shillings will go farther in London than in any city in the world with those who know how to spend it—but much depends upon that. By all the by-ways he could find George winded his way down to Rosemary Lane, where the "*Black and Blue Reviver*" worketh miracles, and where the children of Israel are its high priests. Within an hour, wonderful was the metamorphosis upon the person of George Rogers. At eleven o'clock he was clothed as a beggar—at twelve he was shabby genteel. The hat in ruins was replaced by one of a newer shape, and that had been brushed and ironed till it was as clear as a looking-glass. The skirtless coat was thrown aside for an olive-coloured one of metropolitan cut, with a velvet collar, and of which, as the Israelite who sold it said, "*de glosk* was not off." The buttonless vest was laid aside for one of a light colour, and the place of the decayed trousers was supplied by a pair of pure white; yea, his feet were enclosed in sheepskin shoes, which, he was assured, had never been upon foot before. Such was the change produced upon the outer man of George Rogers through twenty shillings; and, thus arrayed, with a beating and an anxious heart, he proceeded in the afternoon to the home of the beautiful stranger who had been the eventful first-foot in his father's house. As he crossed the Park by the side of the Serpentine he could not avoid stopping to contemplate, perhaps I should say admire, the change that had been wrought upon his person, as it was reflected in the water as in a mirror. When he had arrived at Pimlico, and been ushered into the house, there was surprise on the face of the gentleman as he surveyed the change

that had come over the person of his guest; but in the countenance of the young lady there was more of delight than of surprise. When he had sat with them for some time the gentleman requested that he would favour them with his history and his adventures in London. George did so from the days of his childhood, until the day when the fair lady before him became his mother's first-foot; and he recounted also his adventures and his struggles in London, as we have related them; and, as he spoke, the lady wept. As he concluded, he said—"And, until this day, I have ever found an expression, which my uncle made in a letter, verified, that 'the moment the elbows of my coat opened every door would shut.'"

"Your uncle!" said the gentleman, eagerly; "who is he?—what is his name?"

"He commands a vessel of his own in the merchant service," replied George, "and his name is John Rogers."

"John Rogers!" added the gentleman; "and your father's name?"

"Richard Rogers," answered George.

The young lady gazed upon him anxiously; and words seemed leaping to her tongue, when the gentleman prevented her, saying, "Isabel, love, I wish to speak with this young man in private," and she withdrew. When they were left alone the gentleman remained silent for a few minutes, at times gazing in the face of George, and again placing his hand upon his brow. At length he said—"I know your uncle, and I am desirous of serving you; he also will assist you if you continue to deserve it. But you must give up book-making as a business; and you must not neglect business for book-making. You understand me. I shall give you a letter to a gentleman in the city, who will take you into his counting-house; and if, at the expiration of three months, I find your conduct has been such as to deserve my approbation, you shall meet me here again."

He then wrote a letter, which, having sealed, he put it, with a purse, into the hands of George, who sat speechless with gratitude and astonishment.

On the following day George delivered the letter to the merchant, and was immediately admitted as a clerk into his counting-house. He was ignorant of the name of his uncle's friend; and when he ventured to inquire of the merchant respecting him, he merely told him he was one whose good opinion he would not advise him to forfeit. In this state of suspense George laboured day by day at the desk; and although he was most diligent, active, and anxious to please, yet, frequently, when he was running up figures, or making out an invoice, his secret thoughts were of the fair Isabel—the daughter of his uncle's friend, and his mother's first-foot. He regretted that he did not inform her father that he was his uncle's heir—he might then have been admitted to his house, and daily seen her on whom his thoughts dwelt. His situation was agreeable enough—it was paradise to what he had experienced; yet the three months of his probation seemed longer than twelve.

He had been a few weeks employed in the counting-house when he received a letter from his parents. His father informed him that they had received a letter from his uncle, who was then in London; but, added he, “he has forgotten to give us his direction, where we may write to him, or where ye may find him.” His mother added an important postscript, in which she informed him that, “She was sorry she was right after a', that there wasna luck in a squintin' first-foot; for he would mind o' the sailor that brought the letter, that said he was to be his uncle's heir; and now it turned out that his uncle had found an heir o' his ain.”

It was the intention of George, when he had read the letter, to go to the house of his benefactor, and inquire for his uncle's address, or the name of the ship; but when he reflected that he might know neither—that he was not to return to his house for three months, nor until he was sent for—and, above all, when he thought that he was no longer his uncle's heir, and that he now could offer up no plea for looking up to the lovely Isabel—he resumed his pen with a stifled sigh, and abandoned the thought of finding out his uncle for the present.

He had been rather more than ten weeks in the office when the unknown Isabel entered and inquired for the merchant. She smiled upon George as she passed him—the smile entered his very soul, and the pen shook in his hand. It was drawing towards evening, and the merchant requested George to accompany the young lady home. Joy and agitation raised a tumult in his breast—he seized his hat—he offered her his arm—but he scarce knew what he did. For half an hour he walked by her side without daring or without being able to utter a single word. They entered the Park; the lamps were lighted amidst the trees along the Mall, and the young moon shone over them. It was a lovely and an imposing scene, and with it George found a tongue. He dwelt upon the effect of the scenery—he quoted passages from his own epic—and he spoke of the time when his fair companion was his mother's first-foot. She informed him that she was then hastening to the deathbed of her grandfather, whom she believed to be the only relative that she had in life—that she arrived in time to receive his blessing, and that, with his dying breath, he told her her father yet lived—and, for the first time, she heard his name, and had found him. George would have asked what that name was, but when he attempted to do so he hesitated, and the question was left unfinished. They spoke of many things, and often they walked in silence; and it was not until the watchman called—"Past nine o'clock" that they seemed to discover that instead of proceeding towards Pimlico they had been walking backward and forward upon the Mall. He accompanied her to her father's door, and left her with his heart filled with unutterable thoughts.

The three months had not quite expired when the anxiously-looked-for invitation arrived, and George Rogers was to dine at the house of his uncle's friend—the father of the fair Isabel. I shall not describe his feelings as he hastened along the streets towards Pimlico. He arrived at the house, and his hand shook as he reached it to the rapper. The door was opened by a strange-looking footman. George thought that he had seen him before—it was, indeed, a face that. if

once seen, was not easily forgotten—the footman had not such large whiskers as Bill Somers, but they were of the same colour, and they certainly were the same eyes that had frightened his mother in the head of her first-foot. He was shown into a room where Isabel and her father waited to receive him. “When I last saw you, sir,” said the latter, “you informed me you were the nephew of John Rogers. He finds he has no cause to be ashamed of you. George, my dear fellow, your uncle Jack gives you his hand! Isabel, welcome your cousin!” “My cousin!” cried George. “My cousin!” said Isabel. What need we say more? Before the New Year came they went down to Scotland a wedded pair, to be his mother’s first-foot in the farm-house which had been rebuilt.



GRIZEL COCHRANE:

A TALE OF TWEEDMOUTH MOOR.



WHEN the tyranny and bigotry of the last James drove his subjects to take up arms against him, one of the most formidable enemies to his dangerous usurpations was Sir John Cochrane, ancestor of the present Earl of Dundonald. He was one of the most prominent actors in Argyle’s rebellion, and for ages a destructive doom seemed to have hung over the house of Campbell, enveloping in a common ruin all who united their fortunes to the cause of its chieftains. The same doom encompassed Sir John Cochrane. He was surrounded by the King’s troops—long, deadly, and desperate was his resistance; but, at length, overpowered by numbers, he was taken prisoner, tried, and condemned to die upon the scaffold. He had but a few days to live, and his jailer waited but the arrival of his death-warrant to lead him forth to execution. His family and his

friends had visited him in prison, and exchanged with him the last, the long, the heart-yearning farewell. But there was one who came not with the rest to receive his blessing—one who was the pride of his eyes, and of his house—even Grizel, the daughter of his love. Twilight was casting a deeper gloom over the gratings of his prison-house, he was mourning for a last look of his favourite child, and his head was pressed against the cold damp walls of his cell, to cool the feverish pulsations that shot through it like stings of fire, when the door of his apartment turned slowly on its unwilling hinges, and his keeper entered, followed by a young and beautiful lady. Her person was tall and commanding, her eyes dark, bright, and tearless; but their brightness spoke of sorrow—of sorrow too deep to be wept away; and her raven tresses were parted over an open brow, clear and pure as the polished marble. The unhappy captive raised his head as they entered—

“My child! my own Grizel!” he exclaimed, and she fell upon his bosom.

“My father! my dear father!” sobbed the miserable maiden, and she dashed away the tear that accompanied the words.

“Your interview must be short—very short,” said the jailer, as he turned and left them for a few minutes together.

“God help and comfort thee, my daughter!” added the unhappy father, as he held her to his breast, and printed a kiss upon her brow. “I had feared that I should die without bestowing my blessing on the head of my own child, and that stung me more than death; but thou art come, my love,—thou art come! and the last blessing of thy wretched father——”

“Nay! forbear! forbear!” she exclaimed; “not thy last blessing!—not thy last! My father shall not die!”

“Be calm! be calm, my child!” returned he; “would to Heaven that I could comfort thee!—my own! my own! But there is no hope—within three days, and thou and all my little ones will be——”

Fatherless—he would have said, but the words died on his tongue.

“Three days!” repeated she, raising her head from his breast, but eagerly pressing his hand—“three days! then there is hope—my father *shall* live! Is not my grandfather the friend of Father Petre, the confessor and the master of the King?—from him he shall beg the life of his son, and my father shall not die.”

“Nay! nay, my Grizel,” returned he; “be not deceived—there is no hope—already my doom is sealed—already the King has signed the order for my execution, and the messenger of death is now on the way.”

“Yet my father *SHALL* not!—*SHALL* not die!” she repeated emphatically, and, clasping her hands together—“Heaven speed a daughter’s purpose!” she exclaimed; and turning to her father, said calmly—“We part now, but we shall meet again.”

“What would my child?” inquired he eagerly, gazing anxiously on her face.

“Ask not now,” she replied, “my father—ask not now; but pray for me and bless me—but not with thy *last* blessing.”

He again pressed her to his heart, and wept upon her neck. In a few moments the jailer entered, and they were torn from the arms of each other.

On the evening of the second day after the interview we have mentioned a wayfaring man crossed the drawbridge at Berwick, from the north, and, proceeding down Marygate, sat down to rest upon a bench by the door of an hostelry on the south side of the street, nearly fronting where what was called the “Main-guard” then stood. He did not enter the inn; for it was above his apparent condition, being that which Oliver Cromwell had made his head-quarters, a few years before, and where, at a somewhat earlier period, James the Sixth had taken up his residence when on his way to enter on the sovereignty of England. The traveller wore a coarse jerkin fastened round his body by a leathern girdle, and over it a short cloak, composed of equally plain materials.

He was evidently a young man; but his beaver was drawn down, so as almost to conceal his features. In the one hand he carried a small bundle, and in the other a pilgrim's staff. Having called for a glass of wine he took a crust of bread from his bundle, and, after resting for a few minutes, rose to depart. The shades of night were setting in, and it threatened to be a night of storms. The heavens were gathering black, the clouds rushing from the sea, sudden gusts of wind were moaning along the streets, accompanied by heavy drops of rain, and the face of the Tweed was troubled.

"Heaven help thee, if thou intendest to travel far in such a night as this!" said the sentinel at the English gate, as the traveller passed him and proceeded to cross the bridge.

In a few minutes he was upon the borders of the wide, desolate, and dreary moor of Tweedmouth, which, for miles, presented a desert of whins, fern, and stunted heath, with here and there a dingle covered with thick brushwood. He slowly toiled over the steep hill, braving the storm which now raged in wildest fury. The rain fell in torrents, and the wind howled as a legion of famished wolves, hurling its doleful and angry echoes over the heath. Still the stranger pushed onward, until he had proceeded about two or three miles from Berwick, when, as if unable longer to brave the storm, he sought shelter amidst some crab and bramble bushes by the wayside. Nearly an hour had passed since he sought this imperfect refuge, and the darkness of the night and the storm had increased together, when the sound of a horse's feet was heard, hurriedly plashing along the road. The rider bent his head to the blast. Suddenly his horse was grasped by the bridle, the rider raised his head, and the traveller stood before him, holding a pistol to his breast.

"Dismount!" cried the stranger, sternly.

The horseman, benumbed and stricken with fear, made an effort to reach his arms; but, in a moment, the hand of the robber, quitting the bridle, grasped the breast of the rider, and dragged him to the ground. He fell heavily on his face, and for several minutes remained senseless. The

stranger seized the leathern bag which contained the mail for the north, and flinging it on his shoulder, rushed across the heath.

Early on the following morning the inhabitants of Berwick were seen hurrying in groups to the spot where the robbery had been committed, and were scattered in every direction around the moor; but no trace of the robbery could be obtained.

Three days had passed, and Sir John Cochrane yet lived. The mail which contained his death-warrant had been robbed; and, before another order for his execution could be given, the intercession of his father, the Earl of Donald, with the King's confessor, might be successful. Grizel now became almost his constant companion in prison, and spoke to him words of comfort. Nearly fourteen days had passed since the robbery of the mail had been committed, and protracted hope in the bosom of the prisoner became more bitter than his first despair. But even that hope, bitter as it was, perished. The intercession of his father had been unsuccessful—and a second time the bigoted, and would-be despotic monarch, had signed the warrant for his death, and within a little more than another day that warrant would reach his prison.

"The will of Heaven be done!" groaned the captive.

"Amen!" returned Grizel, with wild vehemence; "but my father *shall* not die!"

Again the rider with the mail had reached the moor of Tweedmouth, and a second time he bore with him the doom of Cochrane. He spurred his horse to its utmost speed, he looked cautiously before, behind, and around him; and, in his right hand he carried a pistol ready to defend himself. The moon shed a ghastly light across the heath, rendering desolation visible, and giving a spiritual embodiment to every shrub. He was turning the angle of a straggling copse, when his horse reared at the report of a pistol, the fire of which seemed to dash into its very eyes. At the same moment his own pistol flashed, and the horse rearing more violently, he was driven from the saddle. In a moment the

foot of the robber was upon his breast, who, bending over him, and brandishing a short dagger in his hand, said—

“Give me thine arms, or die!”

The heart of the King’s servant failed within him; and, without venturing to reply, he did as he was commanded.

“Now, go thy way,” said the robber sternly, “but leave with me thy horse, and leave with me the mail—lest a worse come upon thee.”

The man therefore arose, and proceeded towards Berwick, trembling; and the robber, mounting the horse which he had left, rode rapidly across the heath.

Preparations were making for the execution of Sir John Cochrane, and the officers of the law waited only for the arrival of the mail with his second death-warrant to lead him forth to the scaffold, when the tidings arrived that the mail had again been robbed. For yet fourteen days, and the life of the prisoner would be again prolonged. He again fell on the neck of his daughter, and wept, and said—

“It is good—the hand of Heaven is in this!”

“Said I not,” replied the maiden—and for the first time she wept aloud—“that my father should not die.”

The fourteen days were not yet past, when the prison doors flew open, and the old Earl of Dundonald rushed to the arms of his son. His intercession with the confessor had been at length successful, and, after twice signing the warrant for the execution of Sir John, which had as often failed in reaching its destination, the King had sealed his pardon. He had hurried with his father from the prison to his own house—his family were clinging around him shedding tears of joy—and they were marvelling with gratitude at the mysterious providence that had twice intercepted the mail, and saved his life, when a stranger craved an audience. Sir John desired him to be admitted—and the robber entered. He was habited, as we have before described, with the coarse cloak and coarser jerkin; but his bearing was above his condition. On entering he slightly touched his beaver, but remained covered.

"When you have perused these," said he, taking two papers from his bosom, "cast them in the fire."

Sir John glanced on them, started, and became pale—they were his death-warrants.

"My deliverer," exclaimed he, "how shall I thank thee—how repay the saviour of my life? My father—my children—thank him for me!"

The old Earl grasped the hand of the stranger; the children embraced his knees; and he burst into tears.

"By what name," eagerly inquired Sir John, "shall I thank my deliverer?"

The stranger wept aloud; and, raising his beaver, the raven tresses of Grizel Cochrane fell upon the coarse cloak.

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed the astonished and enraptured father, "my own child! my saviour—my own Grizel!"

It is unnecessary to add more—the imagination of the reader can supply the rest.



THE HENPECKED MAN.



EVERY one has heard the phrase "*Go to Birgham!*" which signifies much the same as bidding you go to a worse place. The phrase is familiar not only on the Borders, but throughout all Scotland, and has been in use for more than five hundred years, having taken its rise from Birgham being the place where the Scottish nobility were when they dastardly betrayed their country into the hands of the first Edward; and the people, despising the conduct and the cowardice of the nobles, have rendered the saying, "*Go to Birgham!*" an expression of contempt until this day. Many, however, may have heard the saying, and even used it, who know not that Birgham is a small village,

beautifully situated on the north side of the Tweed, about midway between Coldstream and Kelso; though, if I should say that the village itself is beautiful, I should be speaking on the wrong side of the truth. Yet there may be many who have both heard the saying and seen the village who never heard of little Patie Crichton the bicker-maker. Patie was of diminutive stature, and he followed the profession (if the members of the *learned professions* be not offended at my using the term) of a cooper or bicker-maker in Birgham, for many years. His neighbours used to say of him—"The puir body's henpecked."

Patie was in the habit of attending the neighbouring fairs with the water-cogs, cream-bowies, bickers, piggins, and other articles of his manufacture. It was Dunse fair, and Patie said he "had dune extraordinar' weel—the sale had been far beyond what he expeckit." His success might be attributed to the circumstance that, when out of the sight and hearing of his better-half, for every bicker he sold he gave his customers half a dozen jokes into the bargain. Every one, therefore, liked to deal with little Patie. The fair being over, he retired with a crony to a public-house in the Castle Wynd, to crack of old stories over a glass, and inquire into each other's welfare. It was seldom they met, and it was as seldom that Patie dared to indulge in a single glass; but, on the day in question, he thought they could manage another gill, and another was brought. Whether the sight of it reminded him of his domestic miseries, and of what awaited him at home, I cannot tell; but, after drinking another glass, and pronouncing the spirits excellent, he thus addressed his friend:—

"Ay, Robin (his friend's name was Robin Roughead), ye're a happy man—ye're maister in yer ain house, and ye've a wife that adores and obeys ye; but I'm nae better than naebody at my ain fireside. I'll declare I'm waur; wife an' bairns laugh at me—I'm treated like an outlan' body an' a fule. Though, without me, they micht gang and beg, there is nae mair respeck paid to me than if I were a pair o' auld bauchels flung into a corner. Fifteen years syne I couldna

believed it o' Tibby though onybody had sworn it to me. I firmly believe that a gude wife is the greatest blessin' that can be conferred upon a man upon this earth. I can imagine it by the treasure that my faither had in my mither; for, though the best may hae *words* atween them occasionally, and I'm no saying that they hadna, yet they were just like passing showers to mak' the kisses o' the sun upon the earth mair sweet after them. Her whole study was to please him and to mak' him comfortable. She was never happy but when he was happy; an' he was just the same wi' her. I've heard him say that she was worth untold gold. But, O Robin! if I think that a gude wife is the greatest blessin' a man can enjoy, weel do I ken that a scoldin', domineerin' wife is his greatest curse! It's a terrible thing to be snooled in your ain house—naebody can form an idea o't but they wha experience it.

“Ye remember whan I first got acquainted wi' Tibby, she was doing the bondage work at Riselaw. I first saw her coming out o' Eccles kirk ae day, and I really thocht that I had never seen a better-faured or a more gallant-looking lass. Her cheeks were red and white, like a half-ripe strawberry, or rather, I should say, like a cherry; and she seemed as modest and meek as a lamb. It wasna very lang until I drew up; and, though she didna gie me ony great encouragement at first, yet, in a week or twa, after the ice was fairly broken, she became remarkably ceevil, and gied me her oxtar on a Sunday. We used to saunter about the loanings, no saying meikle, but unco happy; and I was aye restless whan I was out o' her sight. Ye may guess that the shoe-maker was nae loser by it during the six months that I ran four times a-week, wet or dry, between Birgham and Riselaw. But the term-time was drawing nigh, and I put the important question, and pressed her to name the day. She hung her head, and she seemed no to ken weel what to say; for she was sae mim and sae gentle then, that ye wad hae said, ‘butter wouldna melt in her mouth.’ And when I pressed her mair urgently—

“‘I'll just leave it to yersel', Peter,' says she.

"I thocht my heart wad louped out at my mouth. I believe there never was a man sae beside himsel' wi' joy in this world afore. I fairly danced again, and cut as many antics as a merry-Andrew. 'O Tibby,' says I,

"I'm owre happy now!—Oh, band my head!
This gift o' joy is like to be my dead.'"

"'I hope no, Peter,' said she; 'I wad rather hae ye to live than dee for me.'

"I thocht she was as sensible as she was bonny, and better natured than baith.

"Weel, I got the house set up, the wedding-day cam, and everything passed owre as agreeably as onybody could desire. I thocht Tibby turnin' bonnier and bonnier. For the first five or six days after the weddin' everything was '*hinny*,' and '*my love*,' and '*Tibby, dear*,' or '*Peter, dear*.' But matters didna stand lang at this. It was on a Saturday nicht, I mind, just afore I was gaun to drap work, that three or four acquaintances cam into the shop to wush me joy, and they insisted I should pay off for the weddin'. Ye ken I never was behint hand; and I agreed that I wad just fling on my coat and step up wi' them to Orange Lane. So I gaed into the house and took down my market coat, which was hingin' behind the bed; and after that I gaed to the kist to tak out a shilling or twa; for, up to that time, Tibby had not usurped the office of Chancellor o' the Exchequer. I did it as cannily as I could; but she had suspected something, and heard the jinkin' o' the siller.

"'What are ye doing, Patie?' says she—'whar are ye gaun?'

"I never heard her voice hae sic a sound afore, save the first time I drew up to her, when it was rather sharp than agreeable.

"'Ou, my dear,' says I, 'I'm just gaun up to Orange Lane a wee while.'

"'To Orange Lane!' says she, 'what in the name o' fortune's gaun to take ye there?'

“‘Oh hinny,’ says I, ‘it’s just a neebor lad or twa that’s drapped in to wush us joy, and, ye ken, we canna but be neebor-like.’

“‘Ay! the sorrow joy them!’ says she, ‘and neebor too! —an’ how meikle will that cost ye?’

“‘Hoot, Tibby,’ says I, for I was quite astonished at her, ‘ye no understand things, woman.’

“‘No understand them!’ says she; ‘I wish to guidness that ye wad understand them though! If that’s the way ye intend to mak the siller flee it’s time there were somebody to tak care o’t.’

“I had put the silver in my pocket, and I was gaun to the door mair surprised than I can weel express, when she cried to me—

“‘Mind what ye spend, and see that ye dinna stop.’

“‘Ye need be under nae apprehensions o’ that, hinny,’ said I, wishing to pacify her.

“‘See that it be sae,’ cried she, as I shut the door.

“I joined my neebors in a state of greater uneasiness o’ mind than I had experienced for a length o’ time. I couldna help thinkin’ but that Tibby had rather early begun to tak the upper hand, and it was what I never expected from her. However, as I was saying, we went up to Orange Lane, and we sat down, an ae gill brocht on anither. Tibby’s health and mine were drunk; we had several capital sangs; and, I dare say, it was weel on for ten o’clock afore we rose to gang awa. I was nae mair affected wi’ drink than I am at this moment. But, somehow or ither, I was uneasy at the idea o’ facing Tibby. I thought it would be a terrible thing to quarrel wi’ her. I opened the door, and, bolting it after me, slipped in, half on the edge of my fit. She was sitting wi’ her hand at her haffit by the side o’ the fire, but she never let on that she either saw or heard me—she didna speak a single word. If ever there was a woman

‘Nursing her wrath to keep it warm,’

it was her that night. I drew in a chair, and, though I was half-fear’d to speak—

“‘What’s the matter, my pet?’ says I; ‘what’s happened ye?’

“But she sat looking into the fire, and never let on she heard me. ‘E’ens ye like, Meg Dorts,’ thought I, as Allan Ramsay says; but I durstna say it, for I saw that there was a storm brewing. At last, I ventured to say again—

“‘What ails ye, Tibby, dear?—are ye no weel?’

“‘Weel!’ cried she; ‘wha can be weel? Is this the way ye mean to carry on? What a time o’ nicht is this to keep a body to, waiting and fretting on o’ ye, their lane? Do ye no think shame o’ yoursel?’

“‘Hoot, woman,’ says I, ‘I’m surprised at ye; I’m sure ye hae naething to mak a wark about—it’s no late yet.’

“‘I dinna ken what ye ca’ late,’ said she; ‘it wadna be late among yer cronies, nae doubt; but if it’s no late, it’s early, for I warrant it’s mornin’.

“‘Nonsense!’ says I.

“‘Dinna tell me it’s nonsense,’ said she, ‘for I’ll be spoken to in nae sic way—I’ll let ye ken that! But how meikle has it cost ye? Ye wad be treating them, nae doubt—and how meikle hae ye spent, if it be a fair question?’

“‘Toots, Tibby!’ said I, ‘whar’s the cause for a’ this? What great deal could it cost me?’

“‘But hair by hair makes the carle’s head bare,’ added she, ‘mind ye that; and mind ye that ye’ve a house to keep aboon your head noo. But if ye canna do it, I maun do it for ye—sae gie me the key o’ that kist—gie me it instantly; and I’ll tak care how ye gang drinkin’ wi’ onybody and treatin’ them till mornin’ again.’

“For the sake o’ peace I gied her the key; for she was speakin’ sae loud that I thought a’ the neebors wad hear—and she had nae suner got it, than awa she gaed to the kist and counted every shilling. I had nae great abundance then mair than I’ve now; and—

“‘Is that a’ ye hae?’ said she; ‘an’ yet ye’ll think o’ gaun drinkin’ and treatin’ folk frae Saturday nicht till

Sabbath mornin'! If this is the life ye intend to lead, I wush to guidness I had ne'er had onything to say to ye.'

" 'And if this is the life ye intend to lead me,' thought I, 'I wush the same thing.'

"But that was but the beginnin' o' my slavery. From that hour to this she has continued on from bad to worse. No man living can form an idea o' what I've suffered but mysel'. In a mornin', or rather, I may say, in a forenoon, for it was aye nine or ten o'clock afore she got up, she sat down to her tea and white scones and butter, while I had to be content wi' a scrimpit bicker o' brose and sour milk for kitchen. Nor was this the warst o't; for, when I cam in frae my wark for my breakfast, mornin' after mornin', the fire was black out; and there had I, before I could get a bite to put in my mouth, to bend down upon my knees and blaw it, and blaw it, till I was half blind wi' ashes—for we hadna a pair o' bellowses; and there wad she lie grumblin' a' the time, ca'in' me useless *this*, and useless *that*; and I just had to put up wi' it. But, after our first bairn was born she grew far worse, and I becam' mair and mair miserable every day. If I had been sleeping through the nicht, and the bairn had begun a kickin', or whingin'—then she was at the scoldin', and I was sure to be started out o' my sleep wi' a great drive atween the shouthers, and her crying—

" 'Get up, ye lazy body, ye—get up, and see what's the maiter wi' this bairn.'

"An' this was the trade half a dizen o' times in a nicht.

"At last, there was ae day, when a' that I had dune was simply saying a word about the denner no bein' ready, and afore ever I kenned whar I was, a cracky-stool that she had bought for the bairn cam fleein' across the room, and gied me a dirl on the elbow, that made me think my arm was broken. Ye may guess what a stroke it was, when I tell ye I couldna lift my hand to my head for a week to come. Noo, the like o' that, ye ken, was what mortal man couldna stand.

“‘Tibby,’ said I, and I looked very desperate and determined, ‘what do you mean by this conduct? By a’ that’s gracious, I’ll no put up wi’ it ony langer!’

“‘Ye’ll no put up wi’ it, *ye cratur!*’ said she; ‘if ye gie me ony mair o’ yer provocation, I’ll pu’ yer lugs for ye—wull ye put up wi’ that?’

“It was terrible for a man to hear his ain wife ca’ him a *cratur!*—just as if I had been a monkey or a laupdoug!

“‘O ye disdainfu’ limmer,’ thought I; ‘but if I could humble your proud spirit, I wad do it!’ Weel, there was a grand new ballant hawkin’ about the country at the time—it was ca’d *Watty and Meg*—ye have nae doubt seen’t. Meg was just such a terrible termagant as my Tibby; and I remembered the perfect reformation that was wrought upon her by Watty’s bidding her fareweel, and threatenin’ to list. So it just struck me that I wad tak a leaf out of the ballant. Therefore, keeping the same serious and determined look, for I was in no humour to seem otherwise—‘Tibby,’ says I, ‘there shall be nae mair o’ this. But I will gang and list this very day, and ye’ll see what will come owre ye then—ye’ll maybe repent o’ yer conduct when it’s owre late.’

“‘List! ye *totum* ye!’ said she; ‘do ye say *list?*’ and she said this in a tone and wi’ a look o’ derision that gied through my very soul. ‘What squad will ye list into?—what regiment will tak ye? Do ye intend to list for a fifer laddie?’ And as she said this, she held up her oxters, as if to tak me below’t.

“I thought I wad hae drapped doun wi’ indignation. I could hae stricken her, if I durst. Ye observe I am just five feet twa inches and an eighth upon my stockin’-soles. That is rather below the army standard—and I maun say it’s a very foolish standard; for a man o’ my height stands a better chance to shoot anither than a giant that wad fire owre his head. But she was aware that I was below the mark, and my threat was of no avail; so I had just to slink awa into the shop, rubbin’ my elbow.

“But the cracky-stool was but the beginnin’ o’ her drivin’;

there wasna a week after that but she let flee at me whatever cam in the way, whenever I, by accident, crossed her cankered humour. It's a wonder that I'm in the land of the living; for I've had the skin peeled off my legs—my arms maistly broken—my head cut, and ither parts o' my body a' black and blue, times out o' number. I thought her an angel when I was courtin' her; but, O Robin! she has turned out—I'll no say what—an adder!—a teeger!—a she fury!

“As for askin' onybody into the house, it's a thing I durstna do for the life that's in my body. I never did it but ance, and that was whan an auld schulefellow, that had been several years in America, ca'ed at the shop to see me. After we had cracked a while—

“‘But I maun see the wife, Patie,’ says he.

“Whether he had heard about her behaviour or no I canna tell; but, I assure ye, his request was onything but agreeable to me. However, I took him into the house, and I introduced him wi' fear and tremblin'.

“‘Tibby, dear,’ said I—and I dinna think I had ca'ed her *dear* for ten years afore—‘here's Mr. W——, an auld schulefellow o' mine, that's come a' the way frae America, an' ca'ed in to see ye.’

“‘Ye're aye meetin' wi' auld schulefellows, or some set or ither, to tak ye aff yer wark,’ muttered she, sulkily, but loud enough for him to hear.

“I was completely at a loss what to do or say next; but, pretending as though I hadna heard her, I said, as familiarly and kindly as I could, though my heart was in a terrible swither—‘Bring out the bottle, lass.’

“‘Bottle!’ quo' she, ‘what bottle? what does the man mean?—has he pairted with the little sense that he ever had?’ But had ye seen her as she said this!—I've seen a cloud black when driven wi' a hurricane, and I've seen it awfu' when roarin' in the agony o' thunder; but never did I see onything that I was mair in fear o' than my wife's face at that moment. But, somehow or ither, I gathered courage to say—‘Hoots, woman, what's the use o' behavin'

that way? I'm sure ye ken weel aneugh it's the speerit bottle.'

"'Tho speerit bottle!' cried she wi' a scream; 'and when was there a speerit bottle within this door? Dinna show yoursel' aff to your American freend for a greater man than ye are, Patie. I think, if wi' a' that ye bring in, I get meat and bits o' duds for your bairns, I do very weel.'

"This piece o' impudence completely knocked me stupid, for, wad ye believe it, Robin? though she had lang driven a' my friends frae about the house, yet never did ony o' *her* friends ca'—and that was maistly every Sunday, and every Coldstream market-day—but there was the bottle out frae the cupboard, which she aye kept under lock and key; and a dram, and a bit short-bread nae less, was aye and to this day handed round to every ane o' them. They hae discovered that it's worth while to make Patie the bicker-maker's a half-way house. But, if I happen to be in when they ca', though she pours out a fu' glass apiece for them, she takes aye guid care to stand in afore me when she comes to me, between them and me, so that they canna see what she is doing, or how meikle she pours out; and, I assure ye, it is seldom a thimble-fu' that fa's to my share, though she hauds the bottle lang up in her hand—mony a time, no a weetin'; and, again and again have I shoved my head past her side, and said—'Your health, Mrs. So-and-so,' or, 'Yours, Mr. Such-a-thing,' wi' no as meikle in my glass as wad drown a midge. Or, if I was sae placed that she durstna but, for shame, fill a glass within half an inch o' the tap or sae, she wad gie me a look, or a wink, or mak a motion o' some kind, which weel did I ken the meanin' o', and which was the same as saying—'Drink it if ye daur!' O Robin, man! it's weel for ye that no kens what it is to be a footba' at your ain fireside. I dare say my freend burned at the bane for me; for he got up, and—

"'I wish you good day, Mr. Crichton,' said he; 'I have business in Kelso to-night yet, and can't stop.'

"I was perfectly overpowered wi' shame; but it was a

relief to me when he gaed awa—and I slipped out after him, and into the shop again.

“ ‘But Tibby’s isna the only persecution that I hae to put up wi’; for we hae five bairns, and she’s brought them a’ up to treat me as she does hersel’. If I offer to correct them, they cry out—‘I’ll tell my mither!’—and frae the auldest to the youngest o’ them, when they speak about me, it is *he* did this, or *he* did that—they for ever talk o’ me as *him!* *him!* I never got the name o’ *faither* frae ane o’ them—and it’s a’ her doings. Now, I just ask ye simply if ony faither would put up wi’ the like o’ that? But I maun put up wi’t. If I were offering to lay hands upon them for’t, I am sure and persuaded she wad raise a’ Birgham about me—my life wadna be safe where she is—but, indeed, I needna say that, for it never is.

“ ‘But there is ae thing that grieves me beyond a’ that I hae mentioned to ye. Ye ken my mither, puir auld body, is a widow now. She is in the seventy-sixth year o’ her age, and very frail. She has naebody to look after her but me—naebody that has a natural right to do it; for I never had ony brothers, as ye ken; and, as for my twa sisters, I dare say they just hae a sair aneugh fecht wi’ their ain families; and as they are at a distance, I dinna ken how they are situated wi’ their guidmen—though I maun say for them, they send her a stane o’ oatmeal, an ounce o’ tobacco, or a pickle tea and sugar now and then, which is very likely as often as they hae it in their power; and that is a great deal mair than I’m *allowed* to do for her—me that has a right to protect and maintain her. A’ that she has to support her is fifteenpence a week aff the parish o’ Mertoun. O Robin, man! Robin, man! my heart rugs within me, when I talk to you about this. A’ that I hae endured is naething to it! To see my puir auld mither in a state o’ starvation, and not to be allowed to gie her a sixpence! O Robin, man!—Robin, man!—is it no awfu’? When she was first left destitute, and a widow, I tried to break the matter to Tibby, and to reason wi’ her.

“ ‘O Tibby, woman!’ said I; ‘I’m very distressed. Here’s

my faither laid in the grave, and I dinna see what's to come o' my mither, puir body—she is auld, and she is frail—she has naebody to look after or provide for her but me.'

" 'You!' cried Tibby—'you! I wush you wad mind what ye are talkin' about! Ye have as many douds, I can tell ye, as ye hae banes to pike! Let your mither do as ither widows hae done before her—let the parish look after her.'

" 'O Tibby, woman!' said I; 'but if ye'll only consider—the parish money is very sma', and, puir body, it will mak her heart sair to receive a penny o't; for she weel kens that my faither would rather hae deed in a ditch than been behanden to either a parish or an individual for a sixpence.'

" 'An' meikle they hae made by their pride,' said Tibby. 'I wush ye wad hand your tongue.'

" 'Ay, but Tibby,' says I, for I was nettled mair than I durst show it, 'but she has been a guid mother to me, and ye ken yersel' that she's no been an ill *guid-mother* to ye. She never stood in the way o' you and me comin' thegither, though I was paying six shillings a week into the house.'

" 'And what am I obliged to her for that?' interrupted my Jezebel.

" 'I dinna ken, Tibby,' says I, 'but it's a hard thing for a son to see a mother in want when he can assist her. Now, it isna meikle she stakes—he never was used wi' dainties; and, if I may just tak her hame, little will serve her, and her meat will ne'er be missed.'

" 'Ye born idiot!' cried Tibby. 'I aye thought ye a fule—but ye are warse than a fule! Bring your mither here! An auld, cross-grained, faut-finding wife, that I ne'er could hae patience to endure for ten minutes in my days! Bring her here, say ye! No! while I live in this house I'll let ye ken that I'll be *mistress*.'

" 'Ay, and maister too,' thought I. I found it was o' nae use to argue wi' her. There was nae possibility o' getting my mither into the house; and as to assisting her wi' a shillin' or twa at a time by chance, or paying her house-rent, or sending her a load o' coals, it was perfectly out o' the question, and beyond my power. Frae the night that I went

to Orange Lane to this moment I hae never had a sixpence under my thumb that I could ca' my ain. Indeed, I never hae money in my hands, unless it be on a day like this, when I hae to gang to a fair, or the like o' that; and even then, before I start, her leddyship sees every bowie, bicker, and piggin that gangs into the cart—she kens the price o' them as weel as I do; and if I shouldna bring hame either money or goods according to her valuation, I actually believe she wad murder me. There is nae cheatin' her. It is by mere chance that, having had a gude market, I've outreached her the day by a shillin' or twa; and ane o' them I'll spend wi' you, Robin, and the rest shall gang to my mither. O man! ye may bless your stars that you dinna ken what it is to hae a termagant wife."

"I'm sorry for ye, Patie," said Robin Ronghead, "but really I think, in a great measure, ye hae yoursel' to blame for it a'!"

"Me!" said Patie—"what do you mean, Robin?"

"Why, Patie," said Robin, "I ken that it's said that every ane can rule a bad wife but he that has her—and I believe it is true. I am quite convinced that naebody kens sae weel where the shoe pinches as they that hae it on, though I am quite satisfied that, had my case been yours, I wad hae brought her to her senses long afore now, though I had

'Dauded her lugs wi' Rab Roryson's bannet,'

or gien her a *koopin'* like your friend the cooper o' Coldingham."

"Save us, man!" said Patie, who loved a joke, even though at second hand, and at his own expense; "but ye see the cooper's case is not in point, though I'm in the same line; for, as I hae observed, I am only five feet twa inches and an eighth in height—my wife *is not the weaker vessel*—that I ken to my sorrow."

"Weel, Patie," said Robin, "I wadna hae ye to lift your hand—I was but jokin' upon that score, it wadna be manly—but there is ae thing that ye can do, and I am sure it wad hae an excellent effect."

“Dearsake! what is that?” cried Patie.

“For a’ that has happened ye,” said Robin, “ye hae just yoursel’ to blame, for giein’ up the key and the siller to her management that night ye gaed to Orange Lane. That is the short and the lang o’ a’ your troubles, Patie.”

“Do ye think sae?” inquired the little bicker-maker.

“Yes, I think sae, Patie, and I say it,” said Robin; “and there is but ae remedy left.”

“And what is that?” asked Patie, eagerly.

“Just this,” said Robin—“*stop the supplies.*”

“*Stop the supplies!*” returned Patie—“what do you mean, Robin?—I canna say that I fully comprehend ye.”

“I just mean this,” added the other, “be your ain banker—your ain cashier—be maister o’ your ain siller—let her find that it is to you she is indebted for every penny she has the power to spend; and if ye dinna bring Tibby to reason and indness within a month my name’s no Robin Ronghead.”

“Do ye think that wad do it?” said Patie.

“If that wadna, naething wad,” answered Robin; “but try for a twelvemonth—begin this very nicht; and if we baith live and be spared to this time next year I’ll meet ye again, and I’ll be the death o’ a mutchkin but that ye tell me Tibby’s a different woman—your bairns different—your hail house different—and your old mither comfortable.”

“O man, if it might be sae,” said Patie; “but this very nicht, the moment I get hame, I’ll try it—and, if I succeed, I’ll treat ye wi’ a bottle o’ wine, and I believe I never drank ane in my life.”

“Agreed,” said Robin; “but mind, ye’re no to do things by halves. Ye’re no to be feared out o’ your resolution because Tibby may fire and storm, and let drive the things in the house at ye—nor even though she should greet.”

“I thoroughly understand ye,” said Patie; “my resolution’s ta’en, and I’ll stand by it.”

“Gie’s your hand on’t,” said Robin, and Patie gave him his hand.

Now the two friends parted, and it is unnecessary for me either to describe their parting or the reception which

Patie, on his arriving at Birgham, met with from his spouse.

Twelve months went round, Dunse fair came again, and after the fair was over Patie Crichton once more went in quest of his old friend, Robin Roughead. He found him standing in the horse market, and—

“How’s a’ wi’ ye, my friend?” says Patie.

“Oh, hearty, hearty,” cries the other; “but how’s a’ wi’ ye?—how is yer family?”

“Come and get the bottle o’ wine that I’ve to gie ye,” said Patie, “and I’ll tell ye a’ about it.”

“I’ll do that,” said Robin; “for my business is dune.”

So they went into the same house in the Castle Wynd where they had been twelve months before, and Patie called for a bottle of wine; but he found that the house had not the wine license, and was therefore content with a gill of whisky made into toddy.

“O man,” said he to Robin, “I wad pay ye half a dizen bottles o’ wine wi’ as great cheerfu’ness as I raise this glass to my lips. It was a grand advice that o’ yours—*stop the supplies.*”

“I am glad to hear it,” said Robin; “I was sure it was the only thing that wad do.”

“Ye shall hear a’ about it,” said Patie. “After parting wi’ ye, I trudged hame to Birgham, and when I got to my house—before I had the sneck o’ the door weel out o’ my hand—

“‘What’s stopp’d ye to this time o’ night, ye fitless, feckless cratur, ye?’ cried Tibby—‘whar hae ye been?—gie an account o’ yoursel!’”

“‘An account o’ mysel!’” says I, and I gied the door a drive ahint me, as if I wad driven it off the hinges—‘for what should I gie an account o’ mysel’?—or wha should I gie it to? I suppose this house is my ain, and I can come in and gang out when I like!’

“‘Yours!’ cried she; ‘is the *body* drunk?’”

“‘No,’ says I; ‘I’m no drunk, but I wad hae you to be decent. Where is my supper?—it is time that I had it.’”

“ ‘Ye might hae come in in time to get it then,’ said she; ‘folk canna keep suppers waitin’ on you.’ ”

“ ‘But I’ll gang whar I can get it,’ said I; and I offered to leave the house.

“ ‘Ill tak the life o’ ye first,’ said she. ‘Gie me the siller. Ye had five cogs, a dizen o’ bickers, twa dizen o’ piggins, three bowies, four cream dishes, and twa ladles, besides the wooden spoons that I packed up mysel’. Gie me the siller,—and, you puir profligate, let me see what ye hae spent.’ ”

“ ‘Gie you the siller!’ says I; ‘na, na, I’ve dune that lang aneugh—I *hae stopped the supplies*, my woman.’ ”

“ ‘Stop your breath!’ cried she; ‘gie me the siller, every farthin’, or woe betide ye.’ ”

“It was needless for her to say *every farthin’*; for had I dune as I used to do, I kenned she would search through every pocket o’ my claes the moment she thocht me asleep—through every hole and corner o’ them, to see if I had cheated her out o’ a single penny—ay, and tak them up and shake them, and shake them, after a’ was due. But I was determined to stand fast by your advice.

“ ‘Do as ye like,’ says I; ‘I’ll bring ye to your senses—I *hae stopped the supplies*.’ ”

“She saw that I wasna drunk, and my manner rather dumfounded her a little. The bairns—wha, as I have tauld ye, she aye encouraged to mock me—began to giggle at me, and to mak’ game o’ me, as usual. I banged out o’ the house, and into the shop, and I took down the belt o’ the bit turning lathe, and into the house I goes again wi’ it in my hand.

“ ‘Wha maks a fule o’ me now?’ says I.

“And they a’ laughed thegither, and I up wi’ the belt and I lounded them round the house and round the house, till ane screamed and anither screamed, and even their mither got clouts in trying to run betwixt them and me; and it was wha to squeel loudest. Sae, after I had brocht them a’ to ken what I was, I awa yont to my mither’s, and I gied her five shillings, puir body; and after stoppin’ an hour wi’ her, I gaed back to the house again. The bairns were a-bed, and

some o' them were still sobbin', and Tibby was sittin' by the fire; but she didna venture to say a word—I had completely astonished her—and as little said I.

“There wasna a word passed between us for three days. I was beginning to carry my head higher in the house, and on the fourth day I observed that she had nae tea to her breakfast. A day or twa after the auldest lassie cam to me ae morning about ten o'clock, and says she—

“‘Faither, I want siller for tea and sugar.’

“‘Gae back to them that sent ye,’ says I, ‘and tell them to fare as I do, and they’ll save the tea and sugar.’

“‘But it is of nae use dwellin’ upon the subject. I did stop the supplies most effectually. I very soon brocht Tibby to ken wha was her bread-winner. An’ when I saw that my object was accomplished I showed mair kindness and affection to her than ever I had dune. The bairns became as obedient as lambs, and she soon came to say—‘Patie, should I do this thing?’—or ‘Patie, should I do that thing?’ So, when I had brocht her that far—‘Tibby,’ says I, ‘we hae a butt and a ben, and it’s grievin’ me to see my auld mithcr starvin’ and left by hersel’ wi’ naebody to look after her. I think I’ll bring her hame the morn—she’ll aye be o’ use to keep the house—she’ll can knit the bairns’ stockin’s or darn them when they are out o’ the heels.’

“‘Weel, Patie,’ said Tibby, ‘I’m sure it’s as little as a son can do, and I’m perfectly agreeable.’

“I banged up—flung my arms round Tibby’s neck—‘Oh! bless ye, my dear!’ says I; ‘bless ye for that!—there’s the key o’ the kist and the siller—from this time henceforth do wi’ it what ye like.’

“Tibby grat. My mother cam hame to my house the next day. Tibby did everything to mak her comfortable—a’ the bairns ran at her biddin’—and, frae that day to this, there isna a happier man on this wide world than Patie Orichton the bicker-maker of Birgham.”

LEAVES

FROM THE DIARY OF AN AGED SPINSTER.

—o—

THE poet of THE ELEGY *par excellence*, hath written two lines which runs thus—

“Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.”

Now, I never can think of these lines but they remind me of the tender, delicate, living, breathing, and neglected flowers that bud, blossom, shed their leaves, and die, in cold, unsunned obscurity—flowers that were formed to shed their fragrance around a man’s heart, and to charm his eye—but which, though wandering melancholy and alone in the wilderness where they grow, he passeth by with neglect, making a companion of his loneliness. But, to drop all metaphor—where will you find a flower more interesting than a spinster of threescore and ten, of sixty, of fifty, or of forty? They have, indeed, “wasted their sweetness on the desert air.” Some call them “old maids;” but it is a malicious appellation, unless it can be proved that they have refused to be wives. I would always take the part of a spinster: they are a peculiar people, far more “sinned against than sinning.” Every blockhead thinks himself at liberty to crack a joke upon them; and when he says something that he conceives to be wondrous smart about Miss Such-an-one and her cat and poodle dog, he conceives himself a marvellous clever fellow; yea, even those of her own sex who are below what is called a “certain age,” (what that age is I cannot tell,) think themselves privileged to giggle at the expense of their elder sister. Now, though there may be a degree of peevishness (and it is not to be wondered at)

amongst the sisterhood, yet with them you will find the most sensitive tenderness of heart, a delicacy that quivers like the aspen leaf at a breath, and a kindliness of soul that a mother might envy—or rather, for envy, shall I not write *imitate*? But, ah! if their history were told, what a chronicle would it exhibit of blighted affections, withered hearts, secret tears, and midnight sighs.

The first spinster of whom I have a particular remembrance, as belonging to her castle, was Diana Darling. It is now six-and-twenty years since Diana paid the debt of nature, up to which period, and for a few years before, she rented a room in Chirnside. It was only a year or two before her death that I became acquainted with her; and I was then very young. But I never shall forget her kindness towards me. She treated me as though I had been her own child, or rather her grandchild, for she was then very little under seventy years of age. She had always an air of gentility about her; people called her “a betterish sort o’ body.” And, although *Miss* and *Mistress* are becoming general appellations now, twenty or thirty years ago, upon the Borders, those titles were only applied to particular persons, or on particular occasions; and whether their more frequent use now is to be attributed to the schoolmaster being abroad, or the dancing-master being abroad, I cannot tell, but Diana Darling, although acknowledged to be a “betterish sort o’ body,” never was spoken of by any other term but “auld Diana,” or “auld Die.” Well do I remember her flowing chintz gown, with short sleeves, her snow-white apron, her whiter cap, and old kid gloves reaching to her elbows; and as well do I remember how she took one of the common *blue cakes* which washerwomen use, and tying it up in a piece of woollen cloth, dipped it in water, and daubed it round and round the walls of her room, to give them the appearance of being papered. I have often heard of and seen *stenciling* since; but, rude as the attempt was, I am almost persuaded that Diana was the first who put it in practice. To keep up gentility putteth people to strange shifts, and often to ridiculous ones—and to both of

these extremities she was driven. But I have hinted that she was a kind-hearted creature; and above all do I remember her for the fine old ballads which she sang to me. But there was one that was an especial favourite with her, and a verse of which, if I remember correctly, ran thus—

“ Fie, Lizzy Lindsay!
Sae lang in the morning ye lie,
Mair fit ye was helping yer minny
To milk a’ the ewes and the kye.”

Diana, however, was a woman of some education, and to a relative she left a sort of history of her life, from which the following is an extract:—

“ My father died before I was eighteen (so began Diana’s narrative), and he left five of us—that is my mother, two sisters, a brother, and myself—five hundred pounds a piece. My sisters were both younger than me; but, within six years after our father’s death, they both got married; and my brother, who was only a year older than myself, left the house also, and took a wife, so that there was nobody but me and my mother left. Everybody thought there was something very singular in this: for it was not natural that the youngest should be taken and the auldest left; and, besides, it was acknowledged that I was the best-faured and the best-tempered in the family; and there could be no dispute but that my siller was as good as theirs.

I must confess, however, that when I was but a lassie o’ sixteen I had drawn up wi’ one James Laidlaw—but I should score out the word *one*, and just say that I had drawn up wi’ *James Laidlaw*. He was a year, or maybe thrice, aulder than me, and I kenned him when he was just a laddie at Mr. Wh—’s school in Dunse; but I took no notice o’ him then in particular, and, indeed, I never did, until one day that I was an errand down by Kimmerghame, and I met James just coming out frae the gardens. It was the summer season, and he had a posie in his hand, and a very bonny posie it was. ‘Here’s a fine day, Diana,’ says he. ‘Yes, it is,’ says I.

So we said nae mair for some time; but he keepit walking by my side, and at last he said—‘What do you think o’ this posie?’ ‘It is very bonny, James,’ said I. ‘I think sae,’ quoth he; ‘and if ye will accept it, there should naebody be mair welcome to it.’ ‘Ou, I thank ye,’ said I, and I blushed in a way—‘why should ye gie me it?’ ‘Never mind,’ says he, ‘tak it for old acquaintance sake—we were at the school together.’

So I took the flowers, and James keepit by my side, and cracked to me a’ the way to my mother’s door, and I cracked to him—and I really wondered that the road between Kimmerghame and Dunse had turned sae short. It wasna half the length that it used to be, or what I thought it ought to be.

But I often saw James Laidlaw after this; and somehow or other I aye met him just as I was coming out o’ the kirk, and weel do I recollect that, one Sabbath in particular, he said to me—‘Diana, will ye no come out and tak a walk after ye get your dinner?’ ‘I dinna ken, James,’ says I; ‘I doubt I daurna, for our folk are very particular, and baith my faither and my mother are terribly against onything like gaun about stravaigin’ on the Sundays.’ ‘Oh, they need never ken where ye’re gaun,’ says he. ‘Weel, I’ll try,’ says I, for by this time I had a sort o’ liking for James. ‘Then,’ said he, ‘I’ll be at the Penny Stane at four o’clock.’ ‘Very weel,’ quoth I.

And, although baith my faither and mother said to me, as I was gaun out—‘Where are ye gaun, lassie?’—‘Oh, no very far,’ said I; and, at four o’clock, I met James at the Penny Stane. I shall never forget the grip that he gied my hand when he took it in his, and said—

‘Ye hae been as good as your word, Diana.’

We wandered awa down by Wedderburn dyke till we came to the Blackadder, and then we sauntered down by the river side till we were opposite Kelloe—and, oh! it was a pleasant afternoon. Everything round about us, aboon us, and among our feet, seemed to ken it was Sunday—everything but James and me. The laverock was singing in the

blue lift—the blackbirds were whistling in the hedges—the mavis chaunted its loud sang frae the bushes on the braes—the linnerts were singing and chirring among the whins—and the shelfa absolutely seemod to follow ye wi' its three noies over again, in order that ye might learn them.

It was the happiest afternoon I ever spent. James grat, and I grat. I got a scolding frae my faither and my mother when I gaed hame, and they demanded to ken where I had been; but the words that James had spoken to me bore me up against their reproaches.

Weel, it was very shortly (I dare say not six months after my faither's death) that James called at my mother's, and as he said, to bid us *fareweel*! He took my mother's hand—I mind I saw him raise it to his lips, while the tears were on his cheeks; and he was also greatly put about to part wi' my sisters; but to me he said—

'Ye'll set me down a bit, Diana.'

He was to take the coach for Liverpool—or, at least, a coach to take him on the road to that town, the next day; and from there he was to proceed to the West Indies, to meet an uncle who was to make him his heir.

I went out wi' him, and we wandered away down by our auld walks; but, oh! he said little, and he sighed often, and his heart was sad. But mine was as sad as his, and I could say as little as him. I winna, I canna write a' the words and the vows that passed. He took the chain frae his watch, and it was o' the best gold, and he also took a pair o' Bibles frae his pocket, and he put the watch-chain and the Bibles into my hand; and—'Diana,' said he, 'take these, dear—keep them for the sake o' your poor James, and, as often as ye see them, think on him.' I took them, and wi' the tears running down my cheeks—'O James,' cried I, 'this is hard!—hard!'

Twice, ay thrice, we bade each other '*fareweel*,' and thrice after he had parted frae me he cam running back again, and throwing his arms around my neck, cried—

'Diana! I canna leave ye!—promise me that ye will never marry onybody else!'

And thrice I promised him that I wouldna.

But he gaed awa, and my only consolation was looking at the Bibles, on one o' the white leaves o' the first volume o' which I found written, by his own hand, '*James Laidlaw and Diana Darling vowed that, if they were spared, they would become man and wife; and that neither time, distance, nor circumstances should absolve their plighted troth. Dated, May 25th, 17—.*'

These were cheering words to me; and I lived on them for years, even after my younger sisters were married, and I had ceased to hear from him. And, during that time, for his sake, I had declined offers which my friends said I was waur than foolish to reject. At least half a dozen good matches I let slip through my hands, and a' for the love o' James Laidlaw, who was far awa, and the vows he had plighted to me by the side o' the Blackadder. And, although he hadna written to me for some years, I couldna think that ony man could be so wicked as to write words o' falsehood and bind them up in the volume o' everlasting truth.

But about ten years after he had gane awa James Laidlaw came back to our neighbourhood; but he wasna the same lad he left—for he was now a dark-complexioned man, and he had wi' him a mulatto woman and three bairns that called him *faither*! He was no longer my James!

My mother was by this time dead, and I expected naething but that the knowledge o' his faithfulness would kill me too—for I had clung to hope till the last straw was broken.

I met him once during his stay in the country, and, strange to tell, it was within a hundred yards o' the very spot where I first foregathered wi' him, when he offered me the posie.

'Ha! Die!' said he, 'my old girl, are you still alive? I'm glad to see you. Is the old woman, your mother, living yet?' I was ready to faint, my heart throbbed as though it would have burst. A' the trials I had ever had were naething to this; and he continued—'Why, if I remember right, there was once something like an old flame between you and me.' 'O James! James!' said I, 'do ye remember

the words ye wrote in the Bible, and the vows that ye made me by the side of the Blackadder?' 'Ha! ha!' said he, and he laughed, 'you are there, are you? I do mind something of it. But, Die, I did not think that a girl like you would have been such a fool as to remember what a boy said to her.'

I would have spoken to him again; but I remembered he was the husband of another woman—though she was a mulatto—an' I hurried away as fast as my fainting heart would permit. I had but one consolation, and that was, that, though he had married another, naebody could compare her face wi' mine.

But it was lang before I got the better o' this sair slight—ay, I may say it was ten years and mair; and I had to try to pingle and find a living upon the interest o' my five hundred pounds, wi' ony other thing that I could turn my hand to in a genteel sort o' way.

I was now getting on the wrang side o' eight-and-thirty; and that is an age when it isna prudent in a spinster to be throwing the pouty side o' her lip to any decent lad that hands out his hand, and says—'Jenny, will ye tak me?' Often and often, baith by day and by night, did I think o' the good bargains I had lost, for the sake o' my fause James Laidlaw; and often, when I saw some o' them that had come praying to me pass me on a Sunday, wi' their wives wi' their hands half round their waist on the horse behint them—'O, James! fause James!' I have said, 'but for trusting to you, and it would hae been me that would this day been riding behint Mr. ——'

But I had still five hundred pounds, and sic fend as I could make, to help what they brought to me. And, about this time, there was one that had the character of being a very respectable sort o' lad, one Walter Sanderson; he was a farmer, very near about my own age, and altogether a most prepossessing and intelligent young man. I first met wi' him at my youngest sister's goodman's kirk, and I must say a better or a more gracefu' dancer I never saw upon a floor. He had neither the jumping o' a mountebank nor the sliding o' a play-actor, but there was an ease in his carriage which

I never saw equalled. I was particularly struck wi' him, and especially his dancing; and it so happened that he was no less struck wi' me. I thought he looked even better than James Laidlaw used to do—but at times I had doubts about it. However, he had stopped all the night at my brother-in-law's as weel as mysel'; and when I got up to gang hame the next day he said he would bear me company. I thanked him, said I was obliged to him, never thinking that he would attempt such a thing. But, just as the powny was brought for me to ride on (and the callant was to come up to Dunse for it at night), Mr. Walter Sanderson mounted his horse, and says he—

'Now, wi' your permission, Miss Darling, I will see you hame.'

It would have been very rude o' me to hae said—'No, I thank you, sir,' and especially at my time o' life, wi' twa younger sisters married that had families; so I blushed, as it were, and giein my powny a twitch, he sprang on to his saddle, and came trotting on by my side. He was very agreeable company; and when he said, 'I shall be most happy to pay you a visit, Miss Darling,' I didna think o' what I had said until after that I had answered him, 'I shall be very happy to see you, sir.' And when I thought o' it, my very cheek-bones burned wi' shame.

But, howsoever, Mr. Sanderson was not long in calling again—and often he did call, and my sisters and their guidmen began to jeer me about him. Weel, he called and called, for I dare say as good as three-quarters of a year; and he was sae backward and modest a' the time that I thought him a very remarkable man; indeed, I began to think him every way superior to James Laidlaw.

But at last he made proposals—I consented—the wedding-day was set, and we had been cried in the kirk. It was the fair-day, just two days before we were to be married, and he came into the house, and, after he had been seated a while, and cracked in his usual kind way—

'Oh,' says he, 'what a bargain I hae missed the day! There are four lots o' cattle in the market, and I might hae cleared four hundred pounds cent. per cent. by them.'

'Losh me! Walter, then,' says I, 'why dinna ye do it? How did ye let sic a bargain slip through your fingers?'

'Woman,' esid he, 'I dinna ken; but a man that ie to be married within eight-and-forty hours is excusable. I came to the fair without any thought o' either buying or selling—but just to see you, Diana—and I kenned there wasna meikle eiller necessary for that.'

'Losh, Walter, man,' said I, 'but that is a pity—and ye say ye could mak cent. per cent. by the beasts?'

'Deed could I,' quoth he—'I am sure o' that.'

'Then, Walter,' says I, 'what is mine the day is to be yours the morn, I may say; and it would be a pity to lose eio a bargain.'

Therefore I put into his hands an order on a branch bank that had been established in Dunse for every farthing that I was worth in the world, and Walter kissed me, and went out to get the money frae the bank, and buy the cattle.

But he hadna been out an hour when one o' my brothers-in-law called, and I thought he looked unco dowie. So I began to tell him about the excellent bargain that Walter had made, and what I had done. But the man started frae his seat ne if he were crazed, and without asking me ony questions, he only cried—'Gracious! Diana! hae ye been sic an idiot?' and, rushing out o' the house, ran to the bank.

He left me in a etate that I canna describe: I neither kenned what to do nor what to think. But within half an hour he returned, and he cried out as he entered—'Diana, ye are ruined! He has taken in you and everybody else. The villain broke yesterday! He ie off! Ye may bid fareweel to your eiller.' 'Wha ie off?' cried I, and I was in eio a etate I was hardly able to speak. 'Walter Sanderson!' answered my brother-in-law.

I believe I went into hysterics; for the first thing I mind o' after his saying so was a dozen people etanding round about me—come slapping at the palms o' my hands, and othere laving water on my breast and temples, until they had me as wet as if they had douked me in Pollock's Well.

I canna tell how I stood up against this clap o' misery. It was near getting the better o' me. For a time I really hated the very name and the sight o' man, and I said, as the song says, that

“Men are a' deceivers.”

But this was not the worst o' it—I had lost my all, and I was now forced into the acquaintanceship of poverty and dependence. I first went to live under the roof o' my youngest sister, who had always been my favourite; but, before six months went round, I found that she began to treat me just as though I had been a servant, ordering me to do this and do the other; and sometimes my dinner was sent ben to me into the kitchen; and the servant lassies, seeing how their mistress treated me, considered that they should be justified in doing the same—and they did the same. Many a weary time have I lain upon my bed and wished never to rise again, for my spirit was weary o' this world. But I put up wi' insult after insult, until flesh and blood could endure it no longer. Then did I go to my other sister, and she hardly opened her mouth to me as I entered her house. I saw that I might gang where I liked—I wasna welcome there. Before I had been a week under her roof I found that the herd's dog led a lady's life to mine. I was forced to leave her too.

And, as a sort o' last alternative, just to keep me in existence, I began a bit shop in a neighbouring town, and took in sewing and washing; and after I had tried them awhile, and found that they would hardly do, I commenced a bit school, at the advice of the minister's wife, and learned bairns their letters and the catechism, and knitting and sewing. I also taught them (for they were a' girls) how to work their samplers, and to write and to cast accounts. But what vexed and humbled me more than all I had suffered was, that one night, just after I had let my scholars away, an auld hedger and ditcher body, almost sixty years o' age, came into the house, and ‘How's a' wi' ye the nicht?’ says he, though I never spoke to the man before. But he took off his bonnet, and pulling in a chair, drew a seat to

the fire. I was thunderstruck! But I was yet mair astonished and ashamed when the auld body, sleeking down his hair and his chin, had the assurance to make love to me!

'There is the door, sir!' cried I. And when he didna seem willing to understand me, I gripped him by the shoulders, and showed him what I meant.

Yet quite composedly he turned round to me and said, 'I dinna see what is the use o' the like o' this—it is true I am aulder than you, but you are at a time o' life now that ye canna expect ony young man to look at ye. Therefore, ye had better think twice before ye turn me to the door. Ye will find it just as easy a life being the wife o' a hedger as keeping a school—rather mair sae, I apprehend, and mair profitable too.' I had nae patience wi' the man. I thought my sisters had insulted me; but this offer o' the hedger's wounded me mair than a' that they had done.

'O, James Laidlaw!' cried I, when I was left to mysel', 'what hae ye brought me to!' My sisters dinna look after me. My parting wi' them has gien them an excuse to forget that I exist. My brother is far frae me, and he is ruled by a wife; and I hae been robbed by another o' the little that I had. I am like a withered tree in a wilderness, standing by its lane—I will fa' and naebody will miss me. I am sick, and there are none to haud my head. My throat is parched, and my lips dry, and there are none to bring me a cup o' water. There is nae *living thing* that I can ca' mine. And some day I shall be found a stiffened corpse in my bed, with no one near me to close my eyes in death, or perform the last office of humanity! For I am alone—I am by myself—I am forgotten in the world; and my latter years, if I have a long life, will be a burden to strangers.' "

But Diana Darling did not so die. Her gentleness, her kindness, caused her to be beloved by many who knew not her history; and when the last stern messenger came to call her hence many watched with tears around her bed of death, and many more in sorrow followed her to the grave. So ran the few leaves in the diary of a spinster—and the reader will forgive our interpolations.

LOTTERY HALL.



I HAD slept on the preceding night at Brampton; and, without entering so far into particulars as to say whether I took the road towards Carlisle, Newcastle, Annan, or to the south, suffice it to say that, towards evening, and just as I was again beginning to think of a resting-place, I overtook a man sauntering along the road with his hands behind his back. A single glance informed me that he was not one who earned his bread by the sweat of his brow; but the same glance also told me that he had not bread enough to spare. His back was covered with a well-worn black coat, the fashion of which belonged to a period at least twelve years preceding the time of which I write. The other parts of his outward man harmonized with his coat so far as apparent age and colour went. His head was covered with a low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat; and on his nose he wore a pair of silver-mounted spectacles. To my mind he presented the picture of a poor scholar, or of gentility in ruins. The lappels of his coat were tinged a little, but only a little, with snuff—which *Flee-up*, or *Beggar's Brown*, as some call it, is very apt to do. In his hands, also, which, as I have said, were behind his back, he held his snuff-box. It is probable that he imagined he had returned it to his pocket after taking a pinch; but he appeared from his very saunter to be a meditative man, and an idea having shot across his brain while in the act of snuff-taking, the box was unconsciously retained in his hand and placed behind his back. Whether the hands are in the way of contemplation or not I cannot tell, for I never think, save when my hand holds a pen; yet I have observed that to carry the hands behind the back is a favourite position with *walking thinkers*. I accordingly set

down the gentleman with the broad-brimmed hat and silver-mounted spectacles to be a walking thinker; and it is more than probable that I should not have broken in upon his musings (for I am not in the habit of speaking to strangers), had it not been that I observed the snuff-box in his hands, and that mine required replenishing at the time. It is amazing and humiliating to think how uncomfortable, fretful, and miserable the want of a pinch of snuff can make a man!—how dust longs for dust! I had been desiring a pinch for an hour, and here it was presented before me like an unexpected spring in the wilderness. Snuffers are like freemasons—there is a sort of brotherhood among them. The real snuffer will not give a pinch to the mere dipper into other people's boxes, but he will never refuse one to the initiated. Now I took the measure of the man's mind at a single glance. I discovered something of the pedant in his very stride—it was thoughtful, measured, mathematical—to say nothing of the spectacles—or of his beard, which was of a dark colour, and which had not been visited by the razor for at least two days. I therefore accosted him in the hackneyed but pompous language attributed to Johnson.

"Sir," said I, "permit me to emerge the summits of my digits in your pulveriferous utensil, in order to excite a grateful titillation in my olfactory nerves!"

"Cheerfully, sir," returned he, handing me the box, for which, by the way, he first groped in his waistcoat-pocket; "I know what pleasure it is—'*nauribus aliquid haurire*.'"

I soon discovered that my companion, to whom a pinch of snuff had thus introduced me, was an agreeable and well-informed man. About a mile before us lay a village in which I intended to take up my quarters for the night, and near the village was a house of considerable dimensions, the appearance of which it would puzzle me to describe. The architect had evidently set all order at defiance—it was a mixture of the castle and the cottage—a heap of stones confusedly put together. Around it was a quantity of trees, poplars, and Scotch firs, and they appeared to have been planted as promiscuously as the house was built. Its appear-

ance excited my curiosity, and I inquired of my companion what it was called, or to whom it belonged.

"Why, sir," said he, "people generally call it LOTTERY HALL, but the original proprietor intended that it should have been named LUCK'S LODGE. There is rather an interesting story connected with it, if you had time to hear it."

"If the story be as amusing as the appearance of the house," added I, "if you have time to tell it I shall hear it."

I discovered that my friend with the silver-mounted spectacles kept what he termed an "Establishment for Young Gentlemen" in the neighbourhood, that being the modernized appellation for a boarding-school; though, judging from his appearance, I did not suppose his establishment to be overfilled; and having informed him that I intended to remain for the night at the village inn, I requested him to accompany me, where, after I had made obeisance to a supper, which was a duty that a walk of forty miles strongly prompted me to perform, I should, "enjoying mine ease," like the good old bishop, gladly hear his tale of Lottery Hall.

Therefore, having reached the inn, and partaken of supper and a glass together, after priming each nostril with a separate pinch from the box aforesaid, he thus began:—

Thirty years ago there dwelt within the village a man named Andrew Donaldson. He was merely a day-labourer upon the estate of the Squire to whom the village belongs; but he was a singular man in many respects, and one whose character very few were able to comprehend. You will be surprised when I inform you that the desire to become a *Man of Fashion* haunted this poor day-labourer like his shadow in the sun. It was the disease of his mind. Now, sir, before proceeding with my story, I shall make a few observations on this plaything and ruler of the world called Fashion. I would describe Fashion to be a deformed little monster with a chameleon skin, bestriding the shoulders of public opinion. Though weak in itself, it has gradually usurped a degree of power that is well nigh irresistible;

and this tyranny prevails, in various forms, but with equal cruelty, over the whole habitable earth. Like a rushing stream, it bears along all ranks and conditions of men, all avocations and professions, and often principles. Fashion is withal a notable courtier, bowing to the strong and flattering the powerful. Fashion is a mere whim, a conceit, a foible, a toy, a folly, and withal an idol whose worshippers are universal. Wherever introduced, it generally assumes the familiar name of Habit; and many of your great and philosophical men, and certain ill-natured old women, who appear at parties in their wedding gowns, and despise the very name of Fashion, are each the slaves of sundry habits which once bore the appellation. Should Fashion miss the skirts of a man's coat it is certain of seizing him by the beard. It is humiliating to the dignity of immortal beings, possessed of capabilities the extent of which is yet unknown, to confess that many of them, professing to be Christians, Jews, Mahomedans, or Pagans, are merely the followers in the stream of Fashion; and are Christians and Jews simply because such a religion was after the fashion of their fathers or country. During the present century it has been the cause of much infidelity and freethinking, or rather, as is more frequently the case with its votaries, of *no thinking*. This arose from wisdom and learning being the fashion; and a vast number of brainless people—who could neither be out of the service of their idol, nor yet endure the plodding labour and severe study necessary for the acquiring of wisdom and learning, and many of them not even possessing the requisite abilities—in order to be thought at once wise men and philosophers, they pronounced religion to be a cheat, futurity a bugbear, and themselves organic clods. Fashion, indeed, is as capricious as it is tyrannical; with one man it plays the infidel, and with another it runs the gauntlet of bible and missionary meetings or benevolent societies. It is like the Emperor of Austria—a compound of intolerable evil and much good. It attempts to penetrate the mysteries of metaphysics, and it mocks the calculations of the most sagacious Chancellor of

the Exchequer. At the nod of Fashion ladies change their gloves, and the children of the glove-makers of Worcester go without dinners. At its call they took the shining buckles from their shoes, and they walked in the laced boot, the sandaled slipper, or the tied shoe. Individually it seemed a small matter whether shoes were fastened with a buckle or with ribbon; but the small-ware manufacturers found a new harvest, while the buckle-makers of Birmingham and their families in thousands were driven through the country to beg, to steal, to coin, to perish. This was the work of Fashion, and its effects are similar to the present hour. If the cloak drive the shawl from the promenade, Paisley and Bolton may go in sackcloth. Here I may observe that the cry of distress is frequently raised against *bad government*, assuming it to be the cause, when fickle Fashion has alone produced the injury. In such a matter government was unable to prevent, and is unable to relieve—Fashion defying all its enactments, and the ladies being the sole governors in the case. For, although the world rules man and his business, and Fashion is the ruler of the world, yet the ladies, though the most devoted of its servants, are at the same time the rulers of Fashion. This last assertion may seem a contradiction, but it is not the less true. With simplicity and the graces Fashion has seldom exhibited any inclination to cultivate an acquaintance; now, the ladies being, in their very nature, form, and feature, the living representatives of these virtues, I am the more surprised that they should be the special patrons of Fashion, seeing that its efforts are more directed to conceal a defect, by making it more deformed, than to lend a charm to elegance or an adornment to beauty. The lady of fortune follows the tide of Fashion till she and her husband are within sight of the shores of poverty. The portionless or the poorly portioned maiden presses on in its wake till she finds herself immured in the everlasting garret of an old maid. The well-dressed woman every man admires—the fashionable woman every man fears. Then comes the animal of the male kind, whose coat is cut, whose hair is curled, and

his very cravat tied according to the fashion. Away with such shreds and patches of effeminacy! But the fashion for which Andrew Donaldson, the day-labourer, sighed, aimed at higher things than this. It grieved him that he was not a better dressed man and a greater man than the squire on whose estate he earned his daily bread. He was a hard and severe man in his own house—at his frown his wife was submissive and his children trembled. His family consisted of his wife; three sons, Paul, Peter, and Jacob; and two daughters, Sarah and Rebecca. Though all scriptural names, they had all been so called after his own relations. His earnings did not exceed eight or nine shillings a week; but even out of this sum he did not permit the one-half to go to the support of his family—and that half was doled out most reluctantly, penny by penny. For twenty years he had never entrusted his wife with the management or the keeping of a single sixpence. With her, of a verity, money was but a *sight*, and that generally in the smallest coins of the realm. She seldom had an opportunity of contemplating the gracious countenance of his Majesty; and when she had, it was invariably upon copper. If she needed but a penny to complete the cooking of a dinner the children had to run for it to the fields, the quarry, or the hedge-side, where their father might be at work; and then it was given with a lecture against their mother's extravagance! Extravagance indeed! to support seven mouths for a week out of five shillings! I have spoken of dinners, and I should tell you that bread was seen in the house but once a day, and that only of the coarsest kind. Potatoes were the staple commodity, and necessity taught Mrs. Donaldson to cook them in twenty different ways; and, although butcher's meat was never seen beneath Andrew's roof, with the exception of pork of their own feeding, in a very small portion, once a week, yet the kindness of the cook in the Squire's family, who occasionally presented her with a jar of *kitchen-fee*, enabled her to dish up her potatoes in modes as various and palatable to the hungry as they were creditable to her own

ingenuity and frugality. Andrew was a man of no expensive habits himself; he had never been known to spend a penny upon liquor of any kind but once, and that was at the christening of his youngest child, who was baptized in the house; when, it being a cold and stormy night, and the minister having far to ride, and withal being labouring under a cold, he said he would thank Andrew for a glass of spirits. The frugal father thought the last born of his flock had made an expensive entry into existence; but handing twopence to his son Paul, he desired him to bring a glass of spirits to his reverence. The spirits were brought in a milk-pot; but a milk-pot was an unsightly and unseemly vessel out of which to ask a minister to drink. The only piece of crystal in the house was a footless wine-glass, out of which a grey linnet drank, and there was no alternative but to take it from the cage, clean it, pour the spirits into it, and hand it, bottomless as it was, to the clergyman—and this was done accordingly. For twenty years this was all that Andrew Donaldson was known to have spent on ale, wine, or spirits; and as, from the period that his children had been able to work, he had not contributed a single sixpence of his earnings towards the maintenance of his house, it was generally believed that he could not be worth less than two or three hundred pounds. Where he kept his money, however, or who was his banker, no one could tell. Some believed that he was saving in order to emigrate to Canada and purchase land; but this was only a surmise. For weeks and months he was frequently wont to manifest the deepest anxiety. His impatience was piteous to behold; but why he was anxious and impatient no one could tell. These fits of anxiety were as frequently succeeded by others of the deepest despondency; and during both his wife and children feared to look in his face, to speak or move in his presence. As his despondency was wont to wear away, his penuriousness in the same degree increased; and at such periods a penny for the most necessary purpose was obstinately refused.

Such were the life and habits of Andrew Donaldson, until his son Paul, who was the eldest of his family, had attained

the age of three-and-twenty, and his daughter Rebecca, the youngest, was seventeen, when, on a Saturday evening, he returned from the market-town, so changed, so elated (though evidently not with strong drink), so kind, so happy, and withal so proud, that his wife and his sons and daughters marvelled, and looked at each other with wonder. He walked backward and forward across the floor with his arms crossed upon his breast, his head thrown back, and he stalked with the majestic stride of a stage-king in a tragedy. He took the fragment of a mirror, which, being fastened in pieces of parchment, hung against the wall, and endeavoured, as he best might, and as its size and its half triangular, half circular form would admit, to survey himself from head to foot. His family gazed on him and at each other with increased astonishment.

"The man's possessed!" whispered Mrs. Donaldson, in terror.

He thrust his hand into his pocket, and drew out a quantity of silver.

"Go, *Miss Rebecca*," said he, "and order John Bell of the King's Head to send Mister Donaldson a bottle of brandy and a bottle of his best wine instantly."

His wife gave a sort of scream, his children started to their feet.

"Go!" said he, stamping his foot, and placing the money in her hand—"go! I order you."

They knew his temper, that he was not to be thwarted, and Rebecca obeyed. He continued to walk across the floor with the same stride of importance; he addressed his sons as Master Donaldson, Master Peter, and Master Jacob, and Sarah, who was the best of the family, as Miss Donaldson. He walked up to his wife, and, with a degree of kindness, such as his family had never witnessed before, he clapped her on the shoulder, and said,

"Catherine, you know the proverb, that 'they who look for a silk gown always get a sleeve o't.' I have long looked for one to you, and now

'I'll mak ye lady o' them a'!"

And, in his own unmusical way, he sang a line or two from the "*Lass o' Gowrie*."

Poor Mrs. Donaldson trembled from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot. Her looks plainly told that she feared her husband had "gone beside himself." He resumed his march across the floor, stately as an admiral on the quarter-deck, when Rebecca entered with the brandy and the wine.

"What!" said he, again stamping his foot, "did I not order you to order John Bell to send the bottles?"

Rebecca shook—but he took them from her hand, and ordered her to bring the glasses! I have already noticed the paucity of glass vessels at Rebecca's baptism. They were not more numerous now; and even the footless glass, out of which the linnet drank, had long ago, with the linnet, gone the way of all flesh and of all glass; and Rebecca placed a white teacup, scored and seamed with age (there were but four in the house), upon the table.

"What! a cup! a cup!" exclaimed he, stamping his foot more vehemently than before, "did I not order you to bring glasses! Me! me! Mister Donaldson drink wine out of a teacup!" And he dashed the cup behind the fire.

"O Paul! Paul!" cried Mrs. Donaldson, addressing her first-born, "is yer faither crazed!—will ye no haud him!—shall we send for the doctor, a strait jacket, or the minister?"

Paul was puzzled: his father did not exactly seem mad; but his conduct, his extravagance, was so unlike anything he had ever seen in him before, that he was troubled on his account, and he rose to reason with him.

"Keep your seat, Master Donaldson," said his father, with the dignity of a duke—"keep your seat, sir; your father is not mad, but before a week go round the best hat in the village shall be lifted to him."

Paul knew not what to think; but he had been taught to fear and to obey his father, and he obeyed him now. Andrew again handed money to his daughter, and ordered her to go and purchase six tumblers and six wine-glasses. Mrs.

Donaldson wrung her hands; she no longer doubted that her husband was "beside himself." The crystal, however, was brought, the wine and the brandy were sent round, and the day-labourer made merry with his children.

On the Monday following he went not out into the fields to his work as usual; but arraying himself in his Sunday attire, he took leave of his family, saying he would be absent for a week. This was as unaccountable as his sending for the wine, the brandy, and the crystal, for no man attended his employment more faithfully than Andrew Donaldson. For twenty years he had never been absent from his work a single day, Sundays and Fast-days alone excepted. His children communed together, and his wife shed tears; she was certain that something had gone wrong about his head; yet, strange as his actions were, his conversation was rational; and though still imperious, he manifested more affection for them all than he had ever done before. They did not dare to question him as to the change that had come over him, or whither he was going; for at all times his mildest answer to all inquiries was, that "fools and bairns should never see things half done." He departed, therefore, without telling why or whither, simply intimating that he would return within seven days, leaving his family in distress and bewilderment.

Sunday came, but no tidings were heard regarding him. With much heaviness of heart and anxiety of spirit his sons and daughters proceeded to the church; and while they, with others, yet stood in groups around the churchyard, a stranger gentleman entered. His step was slow and soldier-like. He carried a silken umbrella to screen himself from the sun, for they were then but little used as a protection from rain; few had at that time discovered that they could be so applied. His head was covered with a hat of the most fashionable shape. His hair was thickly powdered, and gathered up behind in a *queue*. His coat, his vest, his breeches, were of silken velvet, and the colour thereof was the kingly purple—moreover, the knees of the last-mentioned article were fastened with silver buckles, which shone as

stars as the sun fell upon them. His stockings also were of silk, white as the driven snow; and, partly covering these, he wore a pair of boots of the kind called Hessian. In his left hand, as I have said, he carried an umbrella, and in his right he bore a silver-mounted cane. The people gazed with wonder as the stranger paced slowly along the footpath; and, as he approached the door, the sexton lifted his hat, bowed, and walking before him, conducted him to the Squire's pew. The gentleman sat down; he placed his umbrella between his knees, his cane by his side, and from his pocket he drew out a silver snuff-box and a Bible in two volumes, bound in crimson-coloured morocco. As the congregation began to assemble some looked at the stranger in the Squire's seat with wonder. All thought his face was familiar to them. On the countenances of some there was a smile; and from divers parts of the church there issued sounds like the tittering of suppressed laughter. Amongst those who gazed on him were the sons and daughters of Andrew Donaldson. Their cheeks alternately became red, pale, hot, and cold. Their eyes were in a dream, and poor Sarah's head fell, as though she had fainted away, upon the shoulder of her brother Paul. Peter looked at Jacob, and Rebecca hung her head. But the Squire and his family entered. They reached the pew—he bowed to the stranger—gazed—started—frowned—ushered his family rudely past him, and beckoned for the gentleman to leave the pew. In the purple-robed stranger he recognized his own field-labourer, Andrew Donaldson! Andrew, however, kept his seat, and looked haughty and unmoved. But the service began—the preacher looked often to the pew of the Squire, and at length he too seemed to make the discovery, for he paused for a full half minute in the middle of his sermon, gazed at the purple coat, and all the congregation gazed with him, and breaking from his subject, he commenced a lecture against the wickedness of pride and vanity.

The service being concluded, the sons and daughters of Andrew Donaldson proceeded home with as many eyes fixed upon them as upon their father's purple coat. They were

confounded and unhappy beyond the power of words to picture their feelings. They communicated to their mother all that they had seen. She, good soul, was more distressed than even they were, and she sat down and wept for "her poor Andrew." He came not; and Paul, Peter, and Jacob were about to go in quest of him—and they now thought in earnest for a strait-waistcoat—when John Bell's waiter of the King's Head entered, and, presenting Mr. Donaldson's compliments, requested them to come and dine with him. Wife, sons, and daughters were petrified!

"Puir man!" said Mrs. Donaldson, and tears forbade her to say more.

"Oh! my faither! my puir faither!" cried Sarah.

"He does not seem to be poor," answered the waiter.

"What in the world can hae put him sae?" said Jacob.

"We mann try to soothe and humour him," added Paul.

The whole family, therefore, though ashamed to be seen in the village, went to the King's Head together. They were ushered into a room, in the midst of which stood Andrews with divers trunks or boxes around him. His wife screamed as she beheld his transformation; and, clasping her hands, together, she cried—"O Andrew!"

"Catherine," said he, "ye must understand that ye are a lady now, and ye must not call me Andrew, but Mister Donaldson."

"A leddy!" exclaimed she, in a tone of mingled fear and astonishment; "Oh dear! what does the man mean? Bairns! bairns! can nane o'ye bring yer faither to reason?"

"It is you that requires to be brought to reason, Mrs. Donaldson," said he; "but now, since I see that ye are all upon the rack, I'll put ye at your wits' end. I am sensible that baith you and our neighbours have always considered me in the light of a miser. But neither you nor them knew my motive for saving. It has ever been my desire to become the richest, the greatest, and the most respectable man in the parish. But, though you may think that I have pinched the stomach and wasted nothing on the back, this I knew I never could become out of the savings of nine shillings a

week. Yet, night and day, I hoped, prayed, and believed, that it would be accomplished—and it is accomplished!—yes, I repeat, it is accomplished.”

“Oh, help us!—help us!—what’s to be dune wi’ him?” cried Mrs. Donaldson.

“Will ye speak sae that we can understand ye, faither?” said Paul.

“Well, then,” replied Andrew, “for twenty years have I purchased shares in the lotteries, and twenty times did I get nothing but blanks—but I have got it at last!—I have got it at last!”

“What have you got, Andrew?” inquired Mrs. Donaldson, eagerly, whose eyes were beginning to be opened.

“What have ye got, faither?” exclaimed Rebecca, breathlessly, who possessed no small portion of her father’s pride; “how meikle is’t?—will we can keep a coach?”

“Ay, and a coachman too!” answered he, with an air of triumphant pride; “I have got the half of a *thirty thousand*!”

“The like o’ that!” said Mrs. Donaldson, raising her hands.

“A coach!” repeated Rebecca, surveying her face in a mirror.

Sarah looked surprised, but said nothing.

“Fifteen thousand pounds!” said Peter.

“Fifteen thousand!” responded Jacob.

Paul was thoughtful.

“Now,” added Andrew, opening the boxes around him, “go, each of you, cast off the sackcloth which now covers you, and in these you will find garments such as it becomes the family of Andrew Donaldson, Esquire, to wear.”

They obeyed his commands; and, casting aside their home-made cloth and cotton gowns, they appeared before him in the raiments which he had provided for them. The gowns were of silk, the coats of the finest Saxony, the waistcoats Marseilles. Mrs. Donaldson’s dress sat upon her awkwardly—the waist was out of its place, she seemed at a loss what to do with her arms, and altogether she appeared to feel as though the gown were too fine to sit upon. Sarah

was neat, though not neater than she was in the dress of printed cotton which she had cast off; but Rebecca was transformed into the fine lady in a moment, and she tossed her head with the air of a duchess. The sleeves of Paul's coat were too short, Peter's vest would admit of but one button, and Jacob's trousers were deficient in length. Nevertheless, great was the outward change upon the family of Andrew Donaldson, and they gazed upon each other in wonder, as they would have stared at an exhibition of strange animals.

At this period there was a property, consisting of about twenty acres, in the neighbourhood of the village, for sale. Mr. Donaldson became the purchaser, and immediately commenced to build *Luck's Lodge, or Lottery Hall*, which to-day arrested your attention. As you may have seen, it was built under the direction of no architect but caprice, or a fickle and uninformed taste. The house was furnished expensively; there were card-tables and dining-tables, the couch, the sofa, and the harpsichord. Mrs. Donaldson was afraid to touch the furniture, and she thought it little short of sin to sit upon the hair-bottomed mahogany chairs, which were studded with brass nails, bright as the stars in the firmament. Though, however, a harpsichord stood in the dining-room, as yet no music had issued from the Lodge. Sarah had looked at it, and Rebecca had touched it, and appeared delighted with the sounds she produced; but even her mother knew that such sounds were not a tune. A dancing-master, therefore, who at that period was teaching the "five positions" to the youths and maidens of the village, was engaged to teach dancing and the mysteries of the harpsichord at the same time to the daughters of Mr. Donaldson. He had become a great and a rich man in a day; yet the pride of his heart was not satisfied. His neighbours did not lift their hats to him as he had expected; but they passed him saying—"Here's a fine day, Andrew!"—or, "Weel, Andrew, hoo's a' wi' ye the day?" To such observations or inquiries he never returned an answer; but, with his silver-mounted cane in his hand, stalked proudly

on. But this was not all; for, even in passing through the village, he would hear the women remark—"There's that silly body Donaldson away past"—or, "There struts the Lottery Ticket!" These things were wormwood to his spirit, and he repented that he had built his house in a neighbourhood where he was known. To be equal with the Squire, however, and to mortify his neighbours the more, he bought a pair of horses and a barouche. He was long puzzled for a crest and motto with which to emblazon it; and Mrs. Donaldson suggested that Peter should paint on it a lottery ticket, but her husband stamped his foot in anger; and at length the coach painter furnished it with the head and paws of some unknown animal.

Paul had always been given to books; he now requested to be sent to the University. His wish was complied with, and he took his departure for Edinburgh. Peter had always evinced a talent for drawing and painting. When a boy, he was wont to sketch houses and trees with pieces of chalk, which his mother declared to be as *natural as life*, and he now took instructions from a drawing-master. Jacob was ever of an idle turn; and he at first prevailed upon his father to purchase him a riding-horse, and afterwards to furnish him with the means of seeing the world. So Jacob set up gentleman in earnest, and went abroad. Mrs. Donaldson was at home in no part of the house but the kitchen; and in it, notwithstanding her husband's lectures to remember that she was the wife of Mister Donaldson, she was generally found.

At the period when her father obtained the prize, Sarah was on the eve of being united to a respectable young man, a mechanic in the village; but now she was forbidden to speak to or look on him. The cotton gown lay lighter on her bosom than did its silken successor. Rebecca mocked her, and her father persecuted her; but poor Sarah could not cast off the affections of her heart like a worn garment. From her childhood she had been blithe as the lark, but now dull melancholy claimed her as its own. The smile and the rose expired upon her cheeks together, and her health and happi-

ness were crushed beneath her father's wealth. Rebecca, too, in their poverty had been "respected like the lave;" but she now turned disdainfully from her admirer, and when he dared to accost her, she inquired with a frown—"Who are you, sir?" In her efforts also to speak properly she committed foul murder on his Majesty's English; but she became the pride of her father's heart, his favourite daughter whom he delighted to honour.

Still feeling bitterly the want of reverence which was shown him by the villagers, and resolved at the same time to act as other gentlemen of fortune did, as winter drew on Mr. Donaldson removed, with his wife and daughters, and his son Peter, to London. They took up their abode at an hotel in Albemarle Street; and having brought the barouche with them, every afternoon Mr. Donaldson and his daughter Rebecca drove round the Park. His dress was rich and his carriage proud, and he lounged about the most fashionable places of resort; but he was not yet initiated into the mysteries of fashion and greatness; he was ignorant of the key by which their chambers were to be unlocked; and it mortified and surprised him that Andrew Donaldson, Esq., of Luck's Lodge—a gentleman who paid ready money for everything—received no invitations to the routs, the assemblies, or tables of the *haut ton*; but he paraded Bond Street, or sauntered on the Mall, with as little respect shown to him as by his neighbours in the country. When he had been a month in the metropolis he discovered that he had made an omission, and he paid two guineas for the announcement of his arrival in a morning newspaper. "This will do!" said he, twenty times during breakfast, as he held the paper in his hand, and twenty times read the announcement—"Arrived at — Hotel, Albemarle Street, A. Donaldson, Esq., of Luck's Lodge, and family, from their seat in the north." But this did not do; he found that it was two guineas thrown away, but consoled himself with the thought that it would vex the Squire and the people of his native village. With the hope of becoming familiar with the leading men of the great world he became a frequenter of the

principal coffee-rooms. At one of these he shortly became acquainted with a Captain Edwards, who, as Mr. Donaldson affirmed, was intimate with all the world, and bowed to and was known by every nobleman they met. Edwards was one of those creatures who live—Heaven knows how—who are without estates and without fortune, but who appear in the resorts of Fashion as its very mirrors. In a word, he was one of the hangers-on of the nobility and gentry—one of their blacklegs and purveyors. Poor Mr. Donaldson thought him the greatest man he had ever met with. He heard him accost noblemen on the streets in the *afternoon* with—"Good morning, my lord," and they familiarly replied—"Ha! Tom! what's the news?" He had borrowed ten, fifty, and a hundred pounds from his companion; and he had relieved him of a hundred or two more in teaching him to play at whist; but vain, simple Mr. Donaldson never conceived that such a great man and such a fashionable man could be without money, though he could not be at the trouble to carry it. Edwards was between thirty and forty years of age, but looked younger; his hair was black, and tortured into ringlets; his upper lip was ornamented with thin, curved moustachios; and in his dress he was an exquisite, or a buck, as they were then called, of the first water. Mr. Donaldson invited him to his hotel, where he became a daily visitor. He spoke of his uncle the Bishop of such a place, and of his godfather the Earl of another—of his estates in Wales, and the rich advowsons in his gift. Andrew gloried in his fortune; he was now reaching the *acme* of his ambition; he believed there would be no difficulty in getting his friend to bestow one or more of the benefices, when vacant, upon his son Paul; and he thought of sending for Paul to leave Edinburgh, and enter himself of Cambridge. Rebecca displayed all her charms before the Captain, and the Captain all his attractions before her. She triumphed in a conquest; so did he. Mr. Donaldson now also began to give dinners—and to them Captain Edwards invited the Honourable This, and Sir That; but in the midst of his own feast he found himself a cipher, where he was neither looked upon nor re-

garded, but had to think himself honoured in Honourables eating of the banquet for which he had to pay. This galled him nearly as much as the perverseness of his neighbours in the country in not lifting their hats to him; but he feared to notice it, lest by so doing he should lose the distinction of their society. From the manner in which his guests treated him they gave him few opportunities of betraying his origin; but, indeed, though a vain, he was not an ignorant man.

While these things were carrying on in Albemarle Street Mrs. Donaldson was, as she herself expressed it, "uneasy as a fish taken from the water. She said "such ongoing's would be her death;" and she almost wished that the lottery ticket had turned up a blank. Peter was studying the paintings in Somerset House, and taking lessons in oil-colours; Rebecca mingled with the company, or flaunted with Captain Edwards; but poor Sarah drooped like a lily that appeared before its time, and is bitten by the returning frost. She wasted away—she died of a withered heart.

For a few weeks her death stemmed the tide of fashionable folly and extravagance; for, although vanity was the ruling passion of Andrew Donaldson, it could not altogether extinguish the parent in his heart. But his wife was inconsolable; for Sarah had been her favourite daughter, as Rebecca was his. It is a weak and a wicked thing, sir, for parents to make favourites of one child more than another—good never comes of it. Peter painted a portrait of his deceased sister from memory, and sent it to the young man to whom she was betrothed—I say betrothed, for she had said to him "*I will*," and they had broken a ring between them; each took a half of it; and, poor thing, her part of it was found on her breast, in a small bag, when she died. The Captain paid his daily visits—he condoled with Rebecca—and, in a short time, she began to say it was a silly thing for her sister to die; but she was a grovelling-minded girl, she had no spirit.

Soon after this Captain Edwards, in order to cheer Mr. Donaldson, obtained for him admission to a club, where he

introduced him to a needy peer, who was a sort of half proprietor of a nomination borough, and had the sale of the representation of a thousand souls. It was called his lordship's borough. One of his seats was then vacant, and was in the market; and his lordship was in want of money. Captain Edwards whispered the matter to his friend Mr. Donaldson. Now, the latter, though a vain man, and anxious to be thought a fashionable man, was also a shrewd and a calculating man. His ideas expanded—his ambition fired at the thought! He imagined he saw the words ANDREW DONALDSON, ESQ., M.P., in capitals before him. He discovered that he had always had a turn for politics—he remembered that, when a working-man, he had always been too much in an argument for the *Black-nebs*. He thought of the flaming speeches he would make in Parliament—he had a habit of stamping his foot (for he thought it dignified), and he did so, and half exclaimed—"Mr. Speaker!" But he thought also of his family—he sank the idea of advowsons, and he had no doubt but he might push his son Paul forward till he saw him Prime Minister or Lord Chancellor; Peter's genius, he thought, was such as to secure his appointment to the Board of Works whenever he might apply for it; Jacob would make a Secretary to a foreign ambassador; and for Rebecca he provided as a maid of honour. But, beyond all this, he perceived also that, by writing the letters M.P. after his name, he would be a greater man than the Squire of his native village, and its inhabitants would then lift their hats to him when he went down to his seat; or, if they did not he would know how to punish them. He would bring in severer bills on the game laws and against smuggling—he would chastise them with a new turnpike act!

Such were the ideas that passed rapidly through his mind when his friend Edwards suggested the possibility of his becoming a member of parliament.

"And how much do you think it would cost to obtain the seat?" inquired he, anxiously.

"Oh, only a few thousands," replied the Captain.

"How many, think ye?" inquired Mr. Donaldson.

"Can't say exactly," replied the other; "but my friend Mr. Borrowbridge, the solicitor in Clement's Inn, has the management of the affair—we shall inquire of him."

So they went to the solicitor; the price agreed upon for the representation of the borough was five thousand pounds; and the money was paid.

Mr. Donaldson returned to his hotel, his heart swelling within him, and cutting the figures M.P. in the air with his cane as he went along. A letter was despatched to Paul at Edinburgh to write a speech for his father, which he might deliver on the day of his nomination.

"O father," exclaimed Paul, as he read the letter, "much money hath made thee mad!"

The speech was written and forwarded, though reluctantly, by return of post. It was short, sententious, patriotic.

With the speech in his pocket, Mr. Donaldson, accompanied by his friend Edwards, posted down to the borough. But, to their horror, on arriving, they found that a candidate of the opposite party had dared to contest the borough with the nobleman's nominee, and had commenced his canvass the day before. But, what was worse than all, they were told that he bled freely, and his friends were distributing *gooseberries* right and left.

"What is the meaning of all this?" said Mr. Donaldson—"have I not paid for the borough, and is it not mine? I shall punish him for daring to poach upon my grounds."

And, breaking away from Captain Edwards and his friends, he hurried out in quest of the Mayor, to request advice from him. Nor had he gone far, till, addressing a person who was employed in thatching a house—

"Hullo, friend!" cried he, "can you inform me where I shall find the right worshipful the Mayor?"

"Why, zur!" replied the thatcher, "I be's the Mayor!"

Andrew looked at him. "Heaven help us!" thought he—"you the Mayor!—you!—a thatcher!—well may I be a member of parliament!" But, without again addressing his worship, he hastened back to his friends; and with them he was made sensible that, although he had given a considera-

tion for the borough, yet, as opposition had started—as the power of the patron was not omnipotent—as the other candidate was bleeding freely—as he was keeping open houses and giving *yellow gooseberries*—there was nothing for it but that Mr. Donaldson should do the same.

“But, oh! how much will it require?” again inquired the candidate, in a tone of anxiety.

“Oh, merely a thousand or two!” again coolly rejoined Captain Edwards.

“A thousand or two!” ejaculated Mr. Donaldson, for his thousands were becoming few. But, like King Richard, he had “set his fate upon a cast,” and he “would stand the hazard of the die.” As to his landed qualification, if elected, the patron was to provide for that; and, after a few words from his friend Edwards, “Richard was himself again”—his fears vanished—the ocean of his ambition opened before him—he saw golden prospects for himself and for his family—he could soon, when elected, redeem a few thousands; and he bled, he opened houses, he gave *gooseberries* as his opponent did.

But the great, the eventful, the nomination day arrived. Mr. Donaldson—Andrew Donaldson, the labourer, that was—stood forward to make his speech—the speech that his son Paul, student in the University of Edinburgh, had written. He got through the first sentence, in the tone and after the manner of the village clergyman, whom he had attended for forty years; but there he stuck fast; and of all his son Paul had written—short, sententious, patriotic as it was—he remembered not a single word. But, though gravelled from forgetfulness of his son’s matter, and though he stammered, hesitated, and tried to recollect himself for a few moments, yet he had too high an idea of his own consequence to stand completely still. No man who has a consequential idea of his own abilities will ever positively stick in a speech. I remember an old schoolmaster of mine used to say that a public speaker should regard his audience as so many cabbage-stocks. But he had never been a public speaker, or he would have said no such thing. Such an advice may do very

well for a precentor to a congregation; but, as regards an orator addressing a multitude, it is a different matter. No, sir; the man who speaks in public must neither forget his audience nor overlook them; he must regard them as his *equals*, but none of them as his *superiors* in intellect; he should regard every man of them as capable of understanding and appreciating what he may say; and, in order to make himself understood, he should endeavour to bring his language and his imagery down to every capacity, rather than permit them to go on stilts or to take wings. Some silly people imagine that what they call fine language, flowery sentences, and splendid metaphors, are oratory. Stuff!—stuff! Where do you find them in the orations of the immortal orators of Greece or Rome? They used the proper language—they used effective language—

“Thoughts that breathed and words that burned;”

but they knew that the key of eloquence must be applied not to the head but to the heart. But, sir, I digress from the speech of Mr. Donaldson. (Pardon me—I am in the habit of illustrating to my boy, and dissertation is my fault, or rather I should say my habit.) Well, sir, as I have said, he stuck fast in the speech which his son had written; but, as I have also said, he had too high an opinion of himself to stand long without saying something. When left to himself, in what he did say, I am afraid he “betrayed his birth and breeding;” for there was loud laughter in the hall, and cries of *hear him! hear him!* But the poll commenced; the other candidate brought voters from five hundred miles distant—from east, west, north, and south; from Scotland, Ireland, and the Continent. He polled a vote at every three proclamations, when Mr. Donaldson had no more to bring forward; and on the fourteenth day he defeated him by a majority of ONE! The right worshipful thatcher declared that the election had fallen on the opposing candidate. The people also said that he had spent most money, and that it was right the election should fall on the best man. He in truth had spent more in the contest than Andrew Donaldson had won

by his lottery ticket. The feelings of Mr. Donaldson on the loss of his election were the agonies of extreme despair. In the height of his misery he mentioned to his *introducer*, Captain Edwards, or rather I should call him his *traducer*, that he was a ruined man—that he had lost his all! The Captain laughed and left the room. He seemed to have left the town also; for his victim did not meet with him again.

In a state bordering on frenzy he returned to London. He reached the hotel—he rushed into the room where his wife, his son, and his daughter sat. With a confused and hurried step he paced to and fro across the floor, wringing his hands, and ever and anon exclaiming bitterly—

“Lost Andrew Donaldson!—Ruined Andrew Donaldson!”

His son Peter, who took the matter calmly, and who believed that the extent of the loss was the loss of the election, carefully surveyed his father’s attitudes and the expression of his countenance, and thought the scene before him would make an admirable subject for a picture—the piece to be entitled “*The Unsuccessful Candidate*.” “It will help to make good his loss,” thought Peter, “provided he will sit.”

“O dearsake, Andrew! Andrew! what is’t?” cried Mrs. Donaldson.

“Lost! lost! ruined Andrew Donaldson!” replied her husband.

“Oh, where is the Captain?—where is Edwards?—why is he not here?” asked Rebecca.

“The foul fiend!” exclaimed her father.

“O Andrew, man! speak, Andrew, jewel!—what is’t?” added his wife; “if it be only the loss o’ siller, Heaven be praised! for I’ve neither had peace nor comfort since ye got it.”

“*Only* the loss!” cried he, turning upon her like a fury—“*only* the loss!” Agony and passion stopped his utterance.

Mr. Donaldson was, in truth, a ruined man. Of the fifteen thousand which he had obtained not three hundred, exclusive of Lottery Hall, and the twenty acres around it, were left. His career had been a brief and a fashionable

one. On the following day his son Jacob returned from abroad. Within twelve months he had cost his father a thousand pounds; and, in exchange for the money spent, he brought home with him all the vices he had met with on his route. But I blame not Jacob—his betters, the learned and the noble, do the same. Poor fellow! he was sent upon the world with a rough garment round his shoulders, which gathered up all the dust that blew, and retained a portion of all the filth with which it came in contact; but polished substances would not adhere to it.

Captain Edwards returned no more to the hotel. He had given the last lesson to his scholar in the science of fashion—he had extorted from him the last fee he could spare. He had gauged the neck of his purse, and he forsook him—in his debt he forsook him! Poor Rebecca! day after day she inquired after the Captain! the Captain! Lost—degraded—wretched Rebecca! But I will say no more of her; she became as dead while she yet lived—the confiding victim of a villain.

The barouche, the horses, the trinkets that deformed Mrs. Donaldson, with a piano that had been bought for Rebecca, were sold, and Andrew Donaldson with his family left London, and proceeded to Lottery Hall. But there, though he endeavoured to carry his head high, though he still walked with his silver cane, and though it was known (and he took care to make it known) that he had polled within one of being a member of parliament—still the Squire did not acknowledge him—his old acquaintances did not lift their hats to him—but all seemed certain that he was coming down “*by the run*” (I think that was the slang or provincial phrase they used) to his old level. They perceived that he kept no horses now—save one to work the twenty acres around the Lodge; for he had ploughed up and sown with barley, and let out as potato ground, what he at first had laid out as a park. This spoke volumes. They also saw that he had parted with his coach, that he kept but one servant, and that servant told tales in the village. He was laughed at by his neighbours, and those

who had been his fellow-labourers; and, with a sardonic chuckle, they were wont to speak of his house as "*the Member o' Parliament's*." I have said that I would say no more of poor Rebecca; but the tongues of the women in the village dwelt also on her. But she died, and in the same hour died also a new-born child of the villain Edwards.

Peter had left his father's house and commenced the profession of an artist, in a town about twenty miles from this. Mr. Donaldson was now humbled. It was his intention, with the sorry remnant of his fortune, to take a farm for Jacob; but, oh! Jacob had bathed in a sea of vice, and the bitter waters of adversity could not wash out the pollution it had left behind it. Into his native village he carried the habits he had acquired or witnessed beneath the cerulean skies of Italy, or amidst the dark-eyed daughters of France. Shame followed his footsteps. Yea, although the Squire despised Mr. Donaldson, his son, a youth of nineteen, became the boon companion of Jacob. They held midnight orgies together. Jacob initiated the Squireling into the mysteries of Paris and Rome, of Naples and Munich, whence he was about to proceed. But I will not dwell upon their short career. Extravagance attended it, shame and tears followed it.

Andrew Donaldson no longer possessed the means of upholding his son in folly and wickedness. He urged him to settle in the world—to take a farm while he had the power left of placing him in it; but Jacob's sins pursued him. He fled from his father's house, and enlisted in a marching regiment about to embark for the East Indies. No more was heard of him for many years, until a letter arrived from one of his comrades announcing that he had fallen at Corunna.

To defray the expenses which his son Jacob had brought upon him, Mr. Donaldson had not only to part with the small remnant that was left him of his fifteen thousand, but to take a heavy mortgage upon Lottery Hall. Again he was compelled to put his hand to the spade and to the plough; and his wife, deprived of her daughters, again became her own servant. Sorrow, shame, and disappointment gnawed

in his heart. His garments of pride, now worn threadbare, were cut off for ever. The persecution, the mockery of his neighbours increased. They asked each other "if they had seen the Member o' Parliament wi' the spade in his hand again?" They quoted the text, "A haughty spirit goes before a fall;" and they remembered passages of the preacher's lecture against pride and vanity on the day when Andrew appeared in his purple coat. He became a solitary man; and, on the face of this globe which we inhabit, there existed not a more miserable being than Andrew Donaldson.

Peter was generally admitted to be a young man of great talents, and bade fair to rise to eminence in his profession as an artist. There was to be an exhibition of the works of living artists in Edinburgh; and Peter went through to it, taking with him more than a dozen pictures, on all subjects and of all sizes. He had landscapes, sea pieces, historical paintings, portraits, fish, game, and compositions, the grouping of which would have done credit to a master. In size they were from five feet square to five inches. His brother Paul, who was still at the college, and who now supported himself by private teaching, was surprised when one morning Peter arrived at his lodgings, with three caddies at his back, bearing his load of pictures. Paul welcomed him with open arms, for he was proud of his brother; he had admired his early talents, and had heard of the progress he had made in his art. With a proud heart and a delighted eye Peter unpacked his paintings and placed them around the room for the inspection of his brother; and great was his brother's admiration.

"What may be their value, Peter?" inquired Paul.

"Between ourselves, Paul," replied Peter, "I would not part with the lot under a thousand guineas!"

"A thousand guineas!" ejaculated the student in surprise: "do you say so?"

"Yes, I say it," answered the painter with importance. "Look ye, Paul—observe this bridal party at the altar—see the blush on the bride's cheek, the joy in the bridegroom's eye—is it not natural? And look at the grouping!—observe
H*

the warmth of the colouring, the breadth of effect, the depth of shade, the freedom of touch! Now, tell me candidly, as a brother, is it not a gem?"

"It is certainly beautiful," answered Paul.

"I tell you what," continued the artist—"though I say it who should not say it, I have seen worse things sold for a thousand guineas."

"You don't say so!" responded the astonished student, and he wished that he had been an artist instead of a scholar.

"I do," added Peter; "and now, Paul, what do you think I intend to do with the money which this will bring?"

"How should I know, brother?" returned the other.

"Why then," said he, "I am resolved to pay off the mortgage on our father's property, that the old man may spend the remainder of his days in comfort."

Paul wept, and taking his brother's hand said, "And if you do, the property shall be yours, Peter."

"Never, brother!" replied the other—"rather than rob you of your birthright I would cut my hand off."

The pictures were again packed up, and the brothers went out in quest of the Secretary to the exhibition, in order to have them submitted to the Committee for admission. The Secretary received them with politeness; he said he was afraid that they could not find room for so many pieces as Mr. Donaldson mentioned, for they wished to give every one a fair chance; but he desired him to forward the pictures, and he would see what could be done for them. The paintings were sent, and Peter heard no more of them for a week, when a printed catalogue and a perpetual ticket were sent to him with the Secretary's compliments. Peter's eyes ran over the catalogue—at length they fell upon "*No. 210, A Bridal Party—P. Donaldson,*" and again, "*No. 230, Dead Game—P. Donaldson;*" but his name did not again occur in the whole catalogue. This was a disappointment; but it was some consolation that his favourite piece had been chosen.

Next day the exhibition opened, and Peter and Paul visited it together. The "Bridal Party" was a small picture with a modest frame, and they anxiously sought round the room in which it was said to be placed; but they saw it not. At length, "Here it is," said Paul—and there indeed it was, thrust into a dark corner of the room, the frame touching the floor, literally crushed and overshadowed beneath a glaring battle-piece, six feet in length, and with a frame seven inches in depth. It was impossible to examine it without going upon your knees. Peter's indignation knew no bounds. He would have torn the picture from its hiding-place, but Paul prevented him. They next looked for No. 230; and, to increase the indignation of the artist, it, with twenty others, was huddled into the passage, where, as Milton saith, there was

"No light, but rather darkness visible."

Or, as Spenser hath it—

"A little gloomy light much like a shade."

For fourteen days did Peter visit the exhibition, and return to the lodgings of his brother, sorrowful and disappointed. The magical word SOLD was not yet attached to the painting which was to redeem his father's property.

One evening, Paul being engaged with his pupils, the artist had gone into a tavern, to drown the bitterness of his disappointment for a few minutes with a bottle of ale. The keenness of his feelings had rendered him oblivious; and in his abstraction and misery he had spoken aloud of his favourite painting, the *Bridal Party*. Two young gentlemen sat in the next box; they either were not in the room when he entered, or he did not observe them. They overheard the monologue to which the artist had unconsciously given utterance, and it struck them as a prime jest to lark with his misery. The words "Splendid piece yon *Bridal Party*;"—"Beautiful!"—"Production of a master!"—"Wonderful that it *sold* in such a bad light and shameful situation!" fell upon Peter's ears. He started up—he hurried round to the box where they sat—

"Gentlemen," he exclaimed, eagerly, "do you speak of the painting No. 210 in the exhibition?"

"Of the same, sir," was the reply.

"I am the artist!—I painted it!" cried Peter.

"You, sir!—you!" cried both the gentlemen at once, "give us your hand, sir—we are proud of having the honour of seeing you."

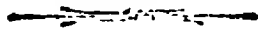
"Yes, sir," returned one of them; "we left the exhibition to-day just before it closed, and had the pleasure of seeing the porter attach the ticket to it."

"Glorious!—joy! joy!" cried Peter, running in ecstasy to the bell and ringing it violently; and as the waiter entered, he added—"A bottle of claret!—claret, boy!—claret!" And he sat down to treat the gentlemen who had announced to him the glad tidings. They drank long and deep, till Peter's head came in contact with the table, and sleep sealed up his eyelids. When aroused by the landlord, who presented his bill, his companions were gone; and, stupid as Peter was, he recollected for the first time that his pocket did not contain funds to discharge the reckoning, and he left his watch with the tavern-keeper, promising to redeem it the next day when he received the price of his picture. I need not tell you what a miserable day that next day was to him, when, with his head aching with the fumes of the wine, he found that he had been duped—that his picture was not sold. The exhibition closed for the season—he had spent his last shilling, and Paul was as poor as Peter; but the former borrowed a guinea to pay his brother's fare on the outside of the coach to —.

Andrew Donaldson continued to struggle hard; but struggle as he would, he could not pay the interest of the mortgage. Disappointment, sorrow, humbled vanity, and the laugh of the world were too much for him; and, shortly after Peter's visit to Edinburgh, he died; repenting that he had ever pursued the phantom Fashion, or sought after the rottenness of wealth.

"And what," inquired I, "became of Mrs. Donaldson, and her sons Paul and Peter?"

“Peter, sir,” continued the narrator, “rose to eminence in his profession; and, redeeming the mortgage on Lottery Hall, he gave it as a present to his brother Paul, who opened it as an establishment for young gentlemen. His mother resides with him—and, sir, Paul hath spoken unto you; he hath given you the history of Lottery Hall.”



SAYINGS AND DOINGS OF PETER PATERSON.



AN every-day biographer would have said that Peter Paterson was the son of pious and respectable parents; and he would have been perfectly right, for the parents of Peter were both pious and respectable. I say they were pious; for, every week-night, as duly as the clock struck nine, and every Sabbath morning and evening, Robin Paterson and his wife Betty called in their man-servant and their maid-servant into what now-a-days would be styled their parlour, and there the voice of Psalms, of reading the Word, and of prayer, was heard; and, moreover, their actions corresponded with their profession. I say also they were respectable; for Robin Paterson rented a farm called Foxlaw, consisting of fifty acres, in which, as his neighbours said, he was “making money like hay”—for land was not three or four guineas an acre in those days. Foxlaw was in the south of Scotland, upon the east coast, and the farmhouse stood on the brae-side, within a stone-throw of the sea. The brae on which Foxlaw stood formed one side of a sort of deep valley or ravine; and at the foot of the valley was a small village, with a few respectable-looking houses scattered here and there in its neighbourhood. Robin and Betty had been married about six years, when, to the exceeding joy of both, Betty brought forth a son, and they

called his name Peter—that having been the Christian name of his paternal grandfather. Before he was six weeks old his mother protested he would be a prodigy; and was heard to say—“See, Robin, man, see!—did ye ever ken the like o’ that?—see how he laughs!—he kens his name already!” And Betty and Robin kissed their child alternately, and gloried in his smile. “O Betty,” said Robin—for Robin was no common man—“that smile was the first spark o’ reason glimmerin’ in our infant’s soul! Thank God! the bairn has a’ its faculties.” At five years old Peter was sent to the village school, where he continued till he was fifteen; and there he was more distinguished as a pugilist than as a book-worm. Nevertheless, Peter contrived almost invariably to remain dux of his class; but this was accounted for by the fact that when he made a blunder no one dared to *trap* him, well knowing that if they had done so, the moment they were out of school Peter would have made his knuckles acquainted with their seat of superior knowledge. On occasions when he was fairly puzzled, and the teacher would put the questions to a boy lower in the class, the latter would tremble and stammer, and look now at his teacher, and now squint at Peter, stammer again, and again look from the one to the other, while Peter would draw his book before his face, and, giving a scowling glint at the stammerer, would give a sort of significant nod to his fist suddenly clenched upon the open page; and when the teacher stamped his foot, and cried, “Speak, sir!” the trembler whimpered, “I daurna, sir.” “Ye daurna!” the enraged dominie would cry—“Why?” “Because—because, sir,” was slowly stammered out, “Peter Paterson wad *lick* me!” Then would the incensed disciplinarian spring upon Peter; and, grasping him by the collar, whirl his *taws* in the air, and bring them with the utmost strength round the back, sides, and limbs of Peter; but Peter was like a rock, and his eyes more stubborn than a rock; and, in the midst of all, he gazed in the face of his tormentor with a look of imperturbable defiance and contempt. Notwithstanding this course of education, when Peter had attained the age

of fifteen, the village instructor found it necessary to call at Foxlaw, and inform Robin Paterson that he could do no more for his son, adding that—"He was fit for the college; and, though he said it, that should not say it, as fit for it as any student that ever entered it." These were glad tidings to a father's heart, and Robin treated the dominie to an extra tumbler. He, however, thought his son was young enough for the college—"We'll wait anither year," said he; "an' Peter can be improvin' himsel' at hame; an' ye can gie a look in, Maister, an' advise us to ony kind o' books ye think he should hae—we'll aye be happy to see ye, for ye've done yer duty to him, I'll say that for ye."

So another year passed on, and Peter remained about the farm. He was now sometimes seen with a book in his hand; but more frequently with a gun, and more frequently still with a fishing-rod. At the end of the twelve months Peter positively refused to go to the college. His mother entreated, and his father threatened; but it was labour in vain. At last—"It's nae use striving against the stream," said Robin—"ye canna gather berries off a whin-bush. Let him e'en tak his ain way, an' he may live to rue it." Thus Peter went on reading, shooting, fishing, and working about the farm till he was eighteen. He now began to receive a number of epithets from his neighbours. His old schoolmaster called him "Ne'er-do-weel Peter;" but the dominie was a mere proser: he knew the moods and tenses of a Greek or Latin sentence, but he was incapable of appreciating its soul. Some called him "Poetical Peter," and a few "Prosing Peter;" but the latter were downright bargain-making, pounds-shillings-and-pence men, whose souls were dead to

"The music of sweet sounds;"

and sensible only of the jink of the coin of the realm. Others called him "*Daft Peter*," for he was the leader of frolic, fun, and harmless mischief; but now the maidens of the village also began to call him "*Handsome Peter*." Yet, he of whom they thus spoke would wander for hours alone by the beach of the solitary sea, gazing upon its army of waves warring

with the winds, till his very spirit took part in the conflict; or he could look till his eyes got blind on its unruffled bosom, when the morning sun flung over it, from the horizon to the shore, a flash of glory; or, when the moonbeams, like a million torches shooting from the deep, danced on its undulating billows—then would he stand, like an entranced being, listening to its everlasting anthem, while his soul, awed and elevated by the magnificence of the scene, worshipped God, the Creator of the great sea. With all his reputed wildness, and with all his thoughtlessness, even on the sea-banks, by the wood, and by the brae-side, Peter found voiceless, yet to him eloquent companions. To him the tender primrose was sacred as the first blush of opening womanhood; and he would converse with the lowly daisy, till his gaze seemed to draw out the very soul of the

“Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower.”

It, however, grieved his mother's spirit to see him, as she said, “Just idlin' awa his time, and leaving his learning at his heels.” His father now said—“Let him just tak his fling an' find his ain weight—an' he'll either mak a spoon or spoil a horn, or my name's no Robin Paterson.” But, from Peter's infancy, it had been his mother's ambition and desire to live to see him, as she expressed it, “wag his pow in a poopit,” or, at any rate, to see him a gentleman. On one occasion, therefore, when Robin was at Dunse hiring-market, the schoolmaster having called on his old pupil, “Ne'er-doweel Peter,” the two entered into a controversy in the presence of Peter's mother, and, in the course of the discussion the man of letters was dumfounded by the fluency and force of the arguments of his young antagonist. Silent tears of exultation stole into Betty's eyes, to hear, as she said, “her bairn expawtiate equal—ay, superior to ony minister;” and no sooner had the teacher withdrawn than, fixing her admiring eyes on her son, she said:

“O, Peter, man, what a delivery ye hae!—an' sae fu' o' the dictioner'! Troth, but ye wad cut a figure i' the poopit!

There wad nae dust gather on your cushion—there wad be nae sleeping, nodding, or snoring, while my Peter was preachin'. An', oh, hinny, but ye will mak' me a glad mother, if ye'll consent to gang to the college! Ye wadna be lang o' getting a kirk, my man—I can tell ye that; an' if ye'll only consent to gang, ye shanna want pocket-money that your faither ken's naething about—my bairn shall appear wi' the best o' them. For syne ever ye was an infant it has hae been my hope an' my prayer, Peter, to see ye a minister; an' I ne'er sent a hunder eggs or a basket o' butter to the market but Peter's pennies were aye laid aside, to keep his pockets at the college."

Peter was, in the main, a most dutiful and most affectionate son; but on this point he was strangely stubborn; and he replied—

"Wheesht, mother! wheesht! nae mair aboot it."

"Nae mair aboot it, bairn!" said she; "but I maun say mair aboot it;—man! wad ye fling awa your learnin' at a dyke-side, an' yer talents at a plough-tail? Wad ye just break yer mother and faither's heart? O, Peter, Peter, man, hae ye nae spirit ava?—What is yer objection?"

"Weel, keep your temper, mother," said he, "and I'll tell ye candidly:—The kirk puts a strait-jacket on a body, that I wadna hae elbow-room in!"

"What do ye mean, ye graceless?" added she, in a voice betokening a sort of horror.

"Oh, naething particular; only, for example, sic bits o' scandal as—the Reverend Peter Paterson was called before the sessions for shooting on his ain glebe—or, the Reverend Peter Paterson was summoned before the presbytery for leistering a salmon at the foot o' Tammy the Miller's dam—or, the Reverend Peter Paterson was ordered to appear before the General Assembly for clappin' Tammy the Miller's servant lassie on the shoulder, an' ca'in' her a winsome queen—or——"

"Or!"—exclaimed his impatient and mortified mother—

"Oh, ye forward an' profane rascal ye! how daur ye speak in sic a strain—or wad ye be guilty o' sic unministerial

conduct?—wad ye disgrace *the coat* by sic ungodly behaviour?”

“There’s nae sayin’, mother,” added he; “but dinna be angry—I’m sure if I did either shoot, leister, or clap a bonny lassie on the shouther, ye wadna think it unlike your son Peter.”

“Weel, weel,” said the good-natured matron, softened down by his manner; “it’s true your faither says it’s nae use striving against the stream; an’ a’ gift’s are na graces. But if ye’ll no be a minister, what will ye be? Wad ye no like to be a writer or an advocate?”

“Worse an’ worse, mither! I wad rather beg than live on the misery of another.”

“Then, callant,” added Betty, “shaking her head, and sighing as she spoke—“I dinna ken what we’ll do wi’ ye. Will ye no be a doctor?”

“What!” said Peter, laughing, and assuming a theatrical attitude—“an apothecary!—make an apothecary of *me*, and cramp *my* genius over a pestle and mortar? No, mother—I will be a farmer, like my father before me.”

“Oh, ye ne’er-do-weel, as your maister ca’s ye!” said his mother, as she rose and left the room in a passion; “ye’ll be a play-actor yet, an’ it will be baith seen an’ heard tell o’, an’ bring disgrace on us a’.”

Peter was, however, spell-bound to the vicinity of Foxlaw by stronger ties than an aversion to the college or a love for farming. He was about seventeen, when a Mr. Graham, with his wife and family, came and took up his residence in one of the respectable-looking houses adjacent to the village. Mr. Graham had been a seafaring man—it was reported the master of a small privateer; and in that capacity had acquired, as the villagers expressed it, “a sort o’ money.” He had a family of several children; but the eldest was a lovely girl called Ann, about the same age as Peter Paterson. Mr. Graham was fond of his gun, and so was Peter; they frequently met on the neighbouring moors, and an intimacy sprang up between them. The old sailor also began to love his young companion; for though a landsman, he had a bold,

reckless spirit: he could row, reef, and steer, and swim like an amphibious animal; and, though only a boy, he was acknowledged to be the only boxer, and the best leaper, runner, and wrestler in the country side—moreover, he could listen to a long yarn, and, over a glass of old grog, toss off his heeltaps like a man; and these qualifications drawing the heart of the skipper toward him, he invited him to his house. But here a change came over the spirit of reckless, roving Peter. He saw Ann; and an invisible hand seemed suddenly to strike him on the breast. His heart leaped to his throat. His eyes were riveted. He felt as if a flame passed over his face. Mr. Graham told his longest stories, and Peter sat like a simpleton—hearing every word, indeed, but not comprehending a single sentence. His entire soul was fixed on the fair being before him—every sense was swallowed up in sight. Ringlets of a shining brown were parted over her fair brow; but Peter could not have told their colour—her soft blue eyes occasionally met his, but noted not their hue. He beheld her lovely face, where the rose and the lily were blended—he saw the almost sculptured elegance of her form; yet it was neither on these—on the shining ringlets, nor the soft blue eyes—that his spirit dwelt; but on Ann Graham, their gentle possessor. He felt as he had never felt before; and he knew not wherefore.

Next day, and every day, found Peter at the house of Captain Graham; and often as love's own hour threw its grey mantle over the hills he was to be seen wandering with the gentle Ann by his side, on the sea banks, by the beach, and in the unfrequented paths. Again and again, when no eye saw them, and when no ear heard them, he had revealed the fulness of his heart before her; and, in the rapture of the moment, sealed his truth upon her lips; while she, with affection too deep for words, would fling her arm across his shoulder, and hide her face on his breast to conceal the tear of joy and of love.

His parents looked upon Ann as their future daughter; and, with Peter, the course of "true love ran smooth." A

farm had been taken in an adjoining parish, on which he was to enter at the following Whitsunday; and on taking possession of his farm Ann Graham was to become his bride. Never did exile long more ardently for his native land than did Peter Paterson for the coming of Whitsunday; but, ere it came, the poetical truth was verified, that

“The course of true love *never did* run smooth.”

Contiguous to the farm of Foxlaw lay the estate of one Laird Horslie—a young gentleman but little known in the neighbourhood; for he had visited it but once, and that only for a few weeks, since it came into his possession. All that was known of him was that he wrote J.P. after his name—that he was a hard landlord, and had the reputation of spending his rents faster than his factor could forward them to him. To him belonged the farm that had been taken for Peter; and it so happened that before the Whitsunday which was to make the latter happy arrived the laird paid a second visit to his estate. At the kirk, on the Sunday, all eyes were fixed on the young laird. Captain Graham was one of his tenants, and occupied a pew immediately behind the square seat of the squire. But, while all eyes were fixed upon Laird Horslie, he turned his back upon the minister, and gazed and gazed again upon the lovely countenance of Ann Graham. All the congregation observed it. Ann blushed and hung her head; but the young squire, with the privilege of a man of property, gazed on unabashed. What was observed by all the rest of the congregation was not unobserved by Peter. Many, with a questionable expression in their eyes, turned them from the laird, and fixed them upon him. Peter observed this also, and his soul was wroth. His face glowed like a furnace; he stood up in his seat, and his teeth were clenched together. His fist was once or twice observed to be clenched also; and he continued scowling on the laird, wishing in his heart for ability to annihilate him with a glance.

Next day the squire called upon the old skipper, and he praised the beauty of Ann in her own presence, and in the

presence of her parents. But there was nothing particular in this; for he called upon all his tenants, he chatted with them, tasted their bottle, paid compliments to their daughters, and declared that their sons did honour to

“Scotland’s glorious peasantry.”

Many began to say that the laird was “a nice young gentleman”—that he had been “wickedly misca’ed;” and the factor “got the wyte o’ a’.” His visits to Mr. Graham’s cottage, however, were continued day after day; and his attentions to Ann became more and more marked. A keen sportsman himself, he was the implacable enemy of poachers, and had strictly prohibited shooting on his estate; but to the old skipper the privilege was granted of shooting when and where he pleased. Instead, therefore, of seeing Peter Paterson and the old seaman in the fields together, it was no uncommon thing to meet the skipper and the squire. The affection of the former, indeed, had wonderfully cooled towards his intended son-in-law. Peter saw and felt this; and the visits of the squire were wormwood to his spirit. If they did not make him jealous they rendered him impatient, impetuous, miserable.

He was wandering alone upon the shore, at the hour which Hogg calls, “between the gloamin’ and the mirk,” in one of these impatient, impetuous, and unhappy moods, when he resolved not to live in a state of torture and anxiety until Whitsunday, but to have the sacred knot tied at once.

Having so determined, Peter turned towards Graham’s cottage. He had not proceeded far when he observed a figure gliding before him on the footpath leading from the village to the cottage. Darkness was gathering fast, but he at once recognized the form before him to be that of his own Ann. She was not a hundred yards before him, and he hastened forward to overtake her; but, as the proverb has it, there is much between the cup and the lip. A part of the footpath ran through a young plantation, and this plantation Ann Graham was just entering when observed by Peter.

He also had entered the wood, when his progress was arrested for a moment by the sudden sound of voices. It was Ann's voice, and it reached his ear in tones of anger and reproach; and these were tones so new to him as proceeding from one whom he regarded as all gentleness and love, that he stood involuntarily still. The words he could not distinguish; but, after halting for an instant, he pushed softly but hastily forward, and heard the voice of the young laird reply—

“A rosebud in a fury, by the goddesses!—Nay, frown not, fairest,” continued he, throwing his arm around her, and adding—

“What pity that so delicate a form
Should be devoted to the rude embrace
Of some indecent clown!”

Peter heard this, and muttered an oath or an ejaculation which we will not write.

“Sir,” said Ann, indignantly, and struggling as she spoke, “if you have the fortune of a gentleman, have, at least, the decency of a man.”

“Nay, sweetest; but you, having the beauty of an angel, have the heart of a woman.” And he attempted to kiss her cheek.

“Laird Horslie!” shouted Peter, as if an earthquake had burst at the heels of the squire—“hands off! I say, hands off!”

Now, Peter did not exactly suit the action to the word; for while he yet exclaimed “hands off!” he with both hands clutched the laird by the collar, and hurling him across the path, caused him to roll like a ball against the foot of a tree.

“Fellow!” exclaimed Horslie, furiously, rising on his knee; and rubbing his sores—

“Fellow!” interrupted Peter—“confound ye, sir, dinna *fellow* me, or there'll be *fellin'* in the way. You can keep yer farm, and be hanged to ye; and let me tell ye, sir, if ye were ten thousand lairds, if ye dared to lay yer ill-faured lips on a sweetheart o' mine, I wad twist yer neck about

like a turnip-shaw!—Come awa, Annie, love,” added he tenderly, “and be thankfu’ I cam in the way.”

Before they entered the house he had obtained her consent to their immediate union; but the acquiescence of the old skipper was still wanting; and when Peter made known his wishes to him—

“Belay!” cried the old boy; “not so fast, Master Peter; a craft such as my girl is worth a longer run, lad. Time enough to take her in tow when you’ve a harbour to moor her in, Master Peter. There may be other cutters upon the coast, too, that will give you a race for her, and that have got what I call *shot* in their lockers. So you can take in a reef, my lad; and, if you don’t like it, why—helm about—that’s all.”

“Captain Graham,” said Peter, proudly and earnestly, “I both understand and feel your remarks; and but for Ann’s sake I would resent them also. But, sir, you are a faither—you are an affectionate one—dinna be a deluded one. By a side-wind ye hae flung my poverty in my teeth; but, sir, if I hae poverty, and Laird Horslie riches, I hae loved yer dochter as a man—he seeks to destroy her like a villain.”

“’Vast, Peter, ’vast!” cried the old man; “mind, I am Ann’s father—tell me what you mean?”

“I mean, sir, that ye hae been hoodwinked,” added the other—“that ye hae been flung aff yer guard, and led to the precipice of the deep dark sea o’ destruction and disgrace; that a villain has hovered round yer house, like a hawk round a wood-pigeon’s nest, waiting an opportunity to destroy yer peace for ever! Sir, to use a phrase o’ yer ain, wad ye behold yer dochter driven a ruined wreck upon the world’s bleak shore, the discarded property o’ the lord o’ the manor? If ye doubt me as to the rascal’s intentions, ask Ann hersel’.”

“’Sdeath, Peter, man!” cried the old tar, “do ye say that the fellow has tried to make a marine of me?—that a lubber has got the weather-gauge of Bill Graham? Call in Ann.”

Ann entered the room where her father and Peter sat.

"Ann, love," said the old man, "I know you are a true girl; you know Squire Horslie, and you know he comes here for you; now, tell me at once, dear—I say, tell me what you think of him?"

"I think," replied she, bursting into tears—"I *know* he is a villain!"

"You know it!" returned he; "blow me, have I harboured a shark! What! the salt water in my girl's eyes, too! If I thought he had whispered a word in your ear but the thing that was honourable—hang me! I would warm the puppy's back with a round dozen with my own hand."

"You have to thank Peter," said she, sobbing, "for rescuing me to-night from his unmanly rudeness."

"What! saved you from his rudeness!—you didn't tell me that, Peter; well, well, my lad, you have saved an old sailor from being drifted on a rock. There's my hand—forgive me—get Ann's, and God bless you!"

Within three weeks all was in readiness for the wedding. At Foxlaw old Betty was, as she said, up to the elbows in preparation, and Robin was almost as happy as his son; for Ann was loved by every one. It was Monday evening, and the wedding was to take place next day. Peter was too much of a sportsman not to have game upon the table at his marriage feast. He took his gun and went among the fields. He had traversed over the fifty acres of Foxlaw in vain, when, in an adjoining field, the property of his rival, he perceived a full-grown hare holding his circuitous gambols. It was a noble-looking animal. The temptation was irresistible. He took aim; and the next moment bounded over the low hedge. He was a dead shot; and he had taken up the prize, and was holding it, surveying it before him, when Mr. Horslie and his gamekeeper sprang upon him, and, ere he was aware, their hands were on his breast. Angry words passed, and words rose to blows. Peter threw the hare over his shoulders, and left the squire and his gamekeeper to console each other on the ground. He returned home; but nothing said he of his second adventure with Laird Horslie.

The wedding-day dawned; and, though the village had no bells to ring, there were not wanting demonstrations of rejoicing; and, as the marriage party passed through its little street to the manse, children shouted, women waved ribbons, and smiled, and every fowling-piece and pistol in the place sent forth a joyful noise; yea, the village Vulcan himself, as they passed his smithy, stood with a rod of red-hot iron in his hand, and having his stithies ranged before him like a battery, and charged with powder, saluted them with a rustic but hearty *feu de joie*. There was not a countenance but seemed to bless them. Peter was the very picture of manly joy, Ann of modesty and love. They were within five yards of the manse, where the minister waited to pronounce over them the charmed and holy words, when Squire Horslie's gamekeeper and two constables intercepted the party.

"You are our prisoner," said one of the latter, producing his warrant, and laying his hand upon Peter.

Peter's cheek grew pale; he stood silent and motionless, as if palsy had smitten his very soul. Ann uttered a short, sudden scream of despair, and fell senseless at the feet of the "best man." Her cry of agony recalled the bridegroom to instant consciousness; he started round—he raised her in his arms, he held her to his bosom. "Ann!—my ain Ann!" he cried; "look up—oh, look up, dear! It is me, Ann!—they canna, they daurna harm me."

Confusion and dismay took possession of the whole party.

"What is the meaning o' this, sirs?" said Robin Paterson, his voice half choked with agitation; "what has my son done that ye choose sic an untimous hour to bring a warrant against him?"

"He has done, old boy, what will give him employment for seven years," said the gamekeeper, insolently. "Constables, do your duty."

"Sirs," said Robin, as they again attempted to lay hands upon his son, "I am sure he has been guilty o' nae crime—leave us noo, an', whatever be his offence, I, his faither, will

be answerable for his forthcoming to the last penny in my possession."

"And I will be bail to the same amount, Master Constables," said the old skipper; "for, blow me, d'ye see, if there an't black work at the bottom o' this, and somebody shall hear about it, that's all!"

Consciousness had returned to the fair bride. She threw her arms around Peter's neck—"They shall not, no, they shall not, take you from me!" she exclaimed.

"No, no, dear," returned he; "dinna put yoursel' about."

The minister had come out of the manse, and offered to join the old men as security for Peter's appearance on the following day.

"To the devil with your bail!—you are no justices. Master Constables," replied the inexorable gamekeeper, "seize him instantly!"

"Slave!" cried Peter, raising his hand and grasping the other by the throat.

"Help! help, in the king's name!" shouted the provincial executors of the law, each seizing him by the arm.

"Be quiet, Peter, my man," said his father, clapping his shoulder, and a tear stole down his cheek as he spoke, "dinna mak bad worse."

"A rescue, by Harry!—a rescue!" cried the old skipper.

"No, no," returned Peter—"no rescue! If it cam to that, I wad need nae assistance. Quit my arms, sirs, and I'll accompany ye in peace. Ann, love—fareweel the noo; an' Heaven bless you, dearest!—but dinna greet, hinny—dinna greet!" And he pressed his lips to hers. "Help her, faither—help her," added he; "see her hame, and try to comfort her."

The old man placed his arm tenderly round her waist—she clung closer to her bridegroom's neck; and, as they gently lifted up her hands, she uttered a heart-piercing, and, it seemed, a heart-broken scream, that rang down the valley like the wail of desolation. Her head dropped upon her

bosom. Peter hastily raised her hand to his lips; then, turning to the myrmidons of the law, said sternly—"I am ready, sirs; lead me where you will."

I might describe to you the fears, the anguish, and the agony of Peter's mother, as, from the door of Foxlaw, she beheld the bridal party return to the village. "Bless me, are they back already!—can onything hae happened the minister?" was her first exclamation; but she saw the villagers collecting around them in silent crowds; she beheld the women raising their hands, as if stricken with dismay; the joy that had greeted them a few minutes before was dead, and the very children seemed to follow in sorrow. "Oh, bairn!" said she to the serving maid, who stood beside her, "saw ye e'er the like o' yon? Rin down an' see what's happened; for my knees are sinking under me." The next moment she beheld her husband and Captain Graham supporting the unwedded bride in their arms. They approached not to Foxlaw, but turned to the direction of the Captain's cottage. A dimness came over the mother's eyes—for a moment they sought her son, but found him not. "Gracious Heaven!" she cried, wringing her hands, "what's this come owre us?" She rushed forward—the valley, the village, and the joyless bridal party floated round before her—her heart was sick with agony, and she fell with her face upon the earth.

The next day found Peter in Greenlaw jail. He had not only been detected in the act of poaching, but a violent assault, as it was termed, against one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace was proved against him; and before his father or his friends could visit him he was hurried to Leith, and placed on board a frigate about to sail from the Roads. He was made of sterner stuff than to sink beneath oppression; and, though his heart yearned for the mourning bride from whose arms he had been torn, and he found it hard to brook the imperious commands and even insolence of men "dressed in a little brief authority," yet, as the awkwardness of a landsman began to wear away, and the tumult of his feelings to subside, his situation became less disagreeable; and,

before twelve months had passed, Peter Paterson was a favourite with every one on board.

At the time we speak of some French privateers had annoyed the fishing smacks employed in carrying salmon from Scotland to London; and the frigate on board of which Peter had been sent was cruising to and fro in quest of them. One beautiful summer evening, when the blue sea was smooth as a mirror, the winds seemed dead, and the very clouds slept motionless beneath the blue sky, the frigate lay becalmed in a sort of bay within two miles of the shore. Well was that shore known to Peter; he was familiar with the appearance of every rock—with the form of every hill—with the situation of every tree—with the name of every house and its inhabitants. It was the place of his birth; and before him the setting sun shed its evening rays upon his father's house, and upon the habitation of her whom he regarded as his wife. He leaned anxiously over the proud bulwarks of the vessel, gazing till his imprisoned soul seemed ready to burst from his body and mingle with the objects it loved. The sun sank behind the hills—the big tears swelled in his eyes—indistinctness gathered over the shore—he wrung his hands in silence and in bitterness. He muttered in agony the name of his parents, and the name of her he loved. He felt himself a slave. He dashed his hand against his forehead—"O Heaven!" he exclaimed aloud, "thy curse upon mine enemy!"

"Paterson!" cried an officer, who had observed him, and overheard his exclamation; "are you mad? See him below," continued he, addressing another seaman; "the fellow appears deranged."

"I am not mad, your honour," returned Peter, though his look and his late manner almost belied his words; and, briefly telling his story, he begged permission to go on shore. The frigate, however, was considered as his prison and his place of punishment; when sent on board he had been described as "a dangerous character"—his recent bitter prayer or imprecation went far in confirmation of that description; and his earnest request was refused.

Darkness silently stretched its dull curtain over earth and sea—still the wind slept as a cradled child, and the evening star, like a gem on the bosom of night, threw its pale light upon the land. Peter had again crept upon the deck; and, while the tears yet glistened in his eyes, he gazed eagerly towards the shore, and on the star of hope and of love. It seemed like a lamp from heaven suspended over his father's house—the home of his heart and of his childhood. He felt as though it at once invited him to the scene of his young affections, and lighted the way. For the first time the gathering tears rolled down his cheeks. He bent his knees—he clasped his hands in silent prayer—one desperate resolution had taken possession of his soul; and the next moment he descended gently into the silent sea. He dived by the side of the vessel; and ascending at the distance of about twenty yards, strained every nerve for the shore.

It was about day-dawn when Robin Paterson and his wife were aroused by the loud barking of their farm-dog; but the sound suddenly ceased, as if the watch-dog were familiar with the intruder; and a gentle tapping was heard at the window of the room where they slept.

“Wha's there?” inquired Betty.

“A friend—an old friend,” was replied in a low and seemingly disguised voice.

But there was no disguising the voice of a lost son to a mother's ear.

“Robin! Robin!” she exclaimed—“it is *him*!—Oh, it is *him*!—Peter!—my bairn!”

In an instant the door flew open, and Peter Paterson stood on his parents' hearth, with their arms around his neck, while their tears were mingled together.

After a brief space wasted in hurried exclamations, inquiries, and tears of joy and surprise—“Come, hinny,” said the anxious mother, “let me get you changed, for ye're wet through and through. Oh, come, my man, and we'll hear a' thing by-and-by—or ye'll get yer death o' cauld, for ye're droukit into the very skin. But, preserve us, bairn! ye hae neither a hat to yer head nor a coat to yer back! O

Peter, hinny, what is't—what's the matter?—tell me what's the meaning o't."

"O mother, do not ask me!—I have but a few minutes to stop. Faither, ye can understand me—I maun go back to the ship again; if I stay, they will be after me."

"O Peter!—Peter, man!" exclaimed Robin, weeping as he spoke, and pressing his son's hand between his—"what's this o't?—yes, yes, yer faither understands ye! But is it no possible to hide?"

"No, no, faither!" replied he; "dinna think o't."

"O bairn!" cried Betty, "what is't ye mean? Wad ye leave yer mother again? Oh! if ye kenned what I've suffered for yer sake, ye wadna speak o't."

"O mother!" exclaimed Peter, dashing his hand before his face, "this is worse than death! But I must!—I must go back, or they would tear me from you. Yet, before I do go, I would see my poor Ann."

"Ye shall see her—see her presently," cried Betty; "and baith her and yer mother will gang down on oor knees to ye, Peter, if ye'll promise not to leave us."

"Haste ye, then, Betty," said Robin, anxiously; "rin awa' ower to Mr. Graham's as quick as ye can; for, though ye no understand it, I see there's nae chance for poor Peter but to tak horse for it before the sun's up."

Hastily the weeping mother flew towards Mr. Graham's. Robin, in spite of the remonstrances of his son, went out to saddle a horse on which he might fly. The sun had not yet risen when Peter beheld his mother, his betrothed bride, and her father, hurrying towards Foxlaw. He rushed out to meet them—to press the object of his love to his heart. They met—their arms were flung around each other.

A loud huzzah burst from a rising ground between them and the beach. The old skipper started round. He beheld a boat's crew of the frigate, with their pistols levelled towards himself, his unhappy daughter, and her hapless bridegroom!

"O Ann, woman!" exclaimed Peter, wildly, "this is terrible! it is mair than flesh and blood can stand."

"Peter! O Peter!" cried the wretched girl, clinging around him.

The party from the frigate approached them. Even their hearts were touched.

"From my soul, I feel for you, Paterson," said the lieutenant commanding them; "and I'm sorry to see these old people and that lovely girl in distress; but you know I must do my duty, lad."

"O sir! sir!" cried his mother, wringing her hands, and addressing the lieutenant, "if ye hae a drap o' compassion in yer heart, spare my puir bairn! O sir! I implore ye, as ye wad expect mercy here or hereafter, dinna tear him frae the door o' the mither that bore him."

"Good woman," replied the officer, "your son must go with us; but I shall do all that I can to render his punishment as light as possible."

Ann uttered a shriek of horror.

"Punishment!" exclaimed Betty, grasping the arm of the lieutenant—"O sir, what do ye mean by punishment? Surely, though your heart was harder than a nether mill-stane, ye couldna be sae cruel as to hurt my bairn for comin' to see his ain mother."

"Sir," said Robin, "my son never intended to rin awa frae your ship. He told me he was gaun to return immediately: I assure ye o' that. But, sir, if ye could only leave him, and if siller can do onything in the case, ye shall hae the savings o' thirty years, an' a faither's blessing into the bargain."

"Oh, ay, sir!" cried his mother; "ye shall hae the last penny we hae i' the world: ye shall hae the very stock off the farm, if ye'll leave my bairn."

The officer shook his head. The sailors attempted to pinion Peter's arms.

"'Vast there, shipmates! 'vast!" said Peter, sorrowfully: "there is no need for that; had I intended to run for it, you would not have found me here. Ann, love——" he added—his heart was too full for words—he groaned—he pressed his teeth upon his lip—he wrung her hand. He grasped the hands of his parents and of Mr. Graham—he burst into

tears, and in bitterness exclaimed, "Farewell!" I will not describe the painful scene, nor paint the silent agony of the father, the heart-rending lamentations of the bereaved mother, nor the tears and anguish of the miserable maiden, who refused to be comforted.

Peter was taken to the boat, and conveyed again to the frigate. His officers sat in judgment upon his offence, and Peter stood as a culprit before them. He begged to be heard in his defence, and his prayer was granted.

"I know, your honours," said Peter, "that I have been guilty of a breach of discipline; but I deny that I had any intention of running from the service. Who amongst you that has a heart to feel, would not, under the same circumstances, have acted as I did? Who that has been torn from a father's hearth, would not brave danger, or death itself, again to take a father by the hand, or to fling his arms around a mother's neck? Or who that has plighted his heart and his troth to one that is dearer than life, would not risk life for her sake? Gentlemen, it becomes not man to punish an act which Heaven has not registered as a crime. You may flog, torture, and degrade me, I do not supplicate for mercy, but will degradation prompt me to serve my king more faithfully? I know you must do your duty, but I know also you will do it as British officers, as men who have hearts to feel."

During this address Peter had laid aside his wonted provincial accent. There was an evident leaning amongst the officers in his favour, and the punishment they awarded him was a few days' confinement.

It was during the second war between Britain and the United States. The frigate was ordered to the coast of Newfoundland. She had cruised upon the station about three months; and, during that time, as the seamen said—"not a lubber of the enemy had dared to show his face—there was no *life* going at all;" and they were becoming impatient for a friendly set-to with their brother Jonathan. It was Peter's watch at the mast-head. "A sail!—a Yankee!" shouted Peter. A sort of wild hurrah burst from his comrades

on the deck. An officer hastily ascended the rigging to ascertain the fact. "All's right," he cried—"a sixty-gun ship, at least."

"Clear the deck, my boys," cried the commander; "get the guns in order—active—be steady, and down upon her."

Within ten minutes all was in readiness for action. "Then down on the deck, my lads," cried the captain; "not a word amongst you—give them a British welcome."

The brave fellows silently knelt by the guns, glowing with impatience for the command to be given to open their fire upon the enemy. The American seemed nothing loth to meet them half way. Like winged engines of death rushing to shower destruction on each other, the proud vessels came within gunshot. The American opened the first fire upon the frigate. Several shot had passed over her, and some of the crew were already wounded. Still no word escaped from the lips of the British commander. At length he spoke a word in the ear of the man at the helm, and the next moment the frigate was brought across the bow of the enemy. "Now, my lads," cried the captain, "now give them it." An earthquake seemed to burst at his words—the American was raked fore and aft, and the dead and dying and limbs of the wounded strewed her deck. The enemy quickly brought their vessel round—then followed the random gun, and anon the heavy broadsides were poured into each other. For an hour the action had continued, but victory or death seemed the determination of both parties. Both ships were crippled, and had become almost unmanageable, and in each, equal courage and seamanship were displayed. It was drawing towards nightfall, they became entangled, and the word "to board!" was given by the commander of the frigate. Peter Paterson was the first man who, cutlass in hand, sprang upon the deck of the American. He seemed to possess a lion's strength, and more than a lion's ferocity. In a few minutes four of the enemy had sunk beneath his weapon. "On, my hearties!—follow Paterson!" cried an officer; "Peter's a hero!" Fifty Englishmen were engaged hand to hand with the crew of

the American; and for a time they gained ground; but they were opposed with a determination equal to their own, and, overpowered by a superiority of numbers, they were driven back and compelled to leap again into the frigate. At the moment his comrades were repulsed Peter was engaged with the first lieutenant of the American—"Stop a minute!" shouted Peter, as he beheld them driven back; "keep your ground till I finish this fellow!" His request was made in vain, and he was left alone on the enemy's deck; but Peter could turn his back upon no man. "It lies between you and me now, friend," said he to his antagonist. He had shivered the sword of the lieutenant by the hilt, when a Yankee scaman, armed with a crowbar, felled Peter to the deck.

Darkness came on and the vessels separated. The Americans were flinging their dead into the sea—they lifted the body of Peter. His hands moved—the supposed dead man groaned. They again placed him on the deck. He at length looked round in bewilderment. He raised himself on his side, "I say, neighbours," said he to the group around him, "is this *our* ship or *yours*?" The Americans made merry at Peter's question. "Well," continued he, "if it be yours, I can only tell you it was foul play that did it. It was a low, cowardly action to fell a man behind his back; but come face to face, and twa at a time if ye like, and I'll clear the decks, o' the whole ship's crew o' you."

"You are a noble fellow," said the lieutenant whom he had encountered, "and if you will join our service I guess your merit shan't be long without promotion."

"What!" cried Peter, "raise my hand against my ain country! Gude gracious, sir! I wad sooner eat it as my next meal!"

In a few weeks the vessel put into Boston for repairs; and on her arrival it was ascertained that peace had been concluded between the two countries. Peter found himself once more at liberty; but with liberty he found himself in a strange land without a sixpence in his pocket. This was no enviable situation to be placed in, even in America, renowned as it is as the paradise of the unfortunate; and he was stand-

ing on the second morning after his being put on shore counting the picturesque islands which stud Boston harbour, for his breakfast, poor fellow, when a person accosted him—"Well, my lad, how is the new world using you?" Peter started round—it was his old adversary the lieutenant.

"A weel-filled pocket, sir," returned Peter, "will mak either the new warld or the auld use you weel; and without that, I reckon your usage in either the ane or the ither wad be naething to mak a song about."

The lieutenant pulled out his purse—"I am not rich, Paterson," said he; "but perhaps I can assist a brave man in need." Peter was prevailed upon to accept a few dollars. He knew that to return to Berwickshire was again to throw himself into the power of his persecutor, and he communed with himself what to do. He could plough—he could manage a farm—he was master of all field-work; and, within a week, he engaged himself as a farm-servant to a proprietor in the neighbourhood of Charleston. He had small reason, however, to be in love with his new employment. Peter was proud and high-minded (in the English, not the American acceptation of the word), and he found his master an imperious, avaricious, republican tyrant. The man's conduct ill-accorded with his professions of universal liberty. His wish seemed to be to level all down to his own standard, that he might the more easily trample on all beneath him. His incessant cry from the rising of the sun until its setting, was, "Work! work!" and with an oath he again called upon his servants to "work!" He treated them as beasts of burden. "Work! hang ye, work!" and a few oaths seemed to be the principal words in the man's vocabulary. Peter had not been over-wrought in the frigate—he had been his own master at Foxlaw—and when doing his utmost he hated to hear those words everlastingly rung in his ear. But he had another cause for abhorring his employment; his master had a number of slaves, on whom he wreaked the full measure of his cruelty. There was one, an old man, in particular, on whom he almost every day gratified his savageness. Peter had beheld the brutal treatment of the old negro till

he could stand it no longer; and one day when he was vainly imploring the man who called himself the owner of his flesh for mercy, Peter rushed forward, he seized the savage by the breast and exclaimed—"Confound ye, sir, if I see ye strike that poor auld black creature again I'll cleave ye to the chin."

The slave-owner trembled with rage. "What!" said he—"it's a fine thing, indeed, if we've walloped the English for liberty, and, after all, a man an't to have the liberty of walloping his own nigger!"

He drew out his purse, and flung Peter's wages contemptuously on the ground. Peter, stooping, placed the money in his pocket, and, turning towards Charleston, proceeded along the bridge to Boston. He had seen enough of tilling another man's fields in America, and resolved to try his fortune in some other way, but was at a loss how to begin. I have already told you how Peter's mother praised his delivery in his debate with the schoolmaster; and Peter himself thought that he could deliver a passage from Shakespeare in a manner that would make the fortune of any hero of the sock and buskin; and he was passing along the Mall, counting the number of trees in every row, much in the same manner, and for the same reason, as he had formerly counted the islands in the harbour, when the thought struck him that the Americans were fond of theatricals; and he resolved to try the stage. He called at the lodgings of the manager in Franklin Place. He gave a specimen of his abilities; and, at a salary of eighteen dollars a week, Peter Paterson was engaged as leader of the "heavy business" of the Boston *corps dramatique*. The tidings would have killed his mother. Lear was chosen as the part in which he was to make his first appearance. The curtain was drawn up. "Peter, what would your mother say?" whispered his conscience, as he looked in the glass, just as the bell rang and the prompter called him; and what, indeed, would Betty Paterson have said to have seen her own son Peter with a red cloak, a painted face, a grey wig, and a white beard falling on his breast! Lear—Peter—entered.

He looked above, below, and around him. The audience clapped their hands, shouted, and clapped their hands again. It was to cheer the new performer. Peter thought they would bring down the theatre. The lights dazzled his eyes. The gallery began to swim—the pit moved—the boxes appeared to wave backward and forward. Peter became pale through the very rouge that bedaubed his face, and sweat, cold as icicles, rained down his temples. The shouting and the clapping of hands was resumed—he felt a trembling about his limbs—he endeavoured to look upon the audience—he could discern only a confused mass. The noise again ceased.

“Attend——France——Burgundy——hem!——Gloster!” faltered out poor Peter. The laughter became louder than the clapping of hands had been before. The manager let Peter off the stage, paid him the half of his week’s salary, and wished him good-bye. It is unnecessary to tell you how Peter, after this disappointment, laid out eight dollars in the purchase of a pack, and how, as pedlar, he travelled for two years among the Indians and back-settlers of Canada, and how he made money in his new calling. He had written to his parents and to Ann Graham; but, in his unsettled way of life, it is no wonder that he had not received an answer. He had written again to say, that, in the course of four months, he would have to be in New York, *in the way of business*—for Peter’s pride would not permit him to acknowledge that he carried a pack—and if they addressed their letters to him at the Post-office there, he would receive them. He had been some weeks in New York, and called every day, with an anxious heart, at the Post-office. But his time was not lost; he had obtained many rare and valuable skins from the Indians, and, with his shop upon his back, he was doing more business than the most fashionable storekeeper in the Broadway. At length a letter arrived. Peter hastily opened the seal, which bore the impress of his mother’s thimble, and read:—“My dear bairn,—This comes to inform ye that baith yer faither and me are weel—thanks to the Giver o’ a’ good—and hoping to

find ye the same. O Peter, hinny, could ye only come hame; did you only ken what sleepless nights I spend on your account, ye wad leave America as soon as ye get my letter. I wonder that ye no ken that Ann, poor woman, an' her father, an' her mother, an' the family, a' gaed to about America mair than a year and a half syne, and I'm surprised ye haena seen them."

"Ann in America!" cried Peter. He was unable to read the remainder of his mother's letter. He again flung his pack upon his shoulder, but not so much to barter and to sell, as to seek his betrothed bride. He visited almost every city in the States, and in the provinces of British America. He advertised for her in more than fifty newspapers; but his search was fruitless—it was "Love's labour lost." Yet, during his search, the world prospered with Peter. His pack had made him rich. He opened a store in New York. He became also a shareholder in canals, and a proprietor in steamboats; in short, he was looked upon as one of the most prosperous men in the city. But his heart yearned for his native land; and Peter Paterson, Esq., turned his property into cash, and embarked for Liverpool.

Ten long years had passed since the eyes of Betty Paterson had looked upon her son; and she was busied, on a winter day, feeding her poultry in the barn-yard, when she observed a post-chaise drive through the village and begin to ascend the hill towards Foxlaw.

"Preserve us, Robin!" she cried, as she bustled into the house, "there's a coach comin' here—what can folk in a coach want wi' the like o' us? Haud awa out an' see what they want, till I fling on a clean mutch an' an apron, an' mak mysel' wiselike."

"I watna wha it can be," said Robin, as he rose and went towards the door.

The chaise drev up—a tall, genteel-looking man alighted from it—at the first glance he seemed nearly forty years of age, but he was much younger. As he approached, Robin started back—his heart sprang to his throat—his tongue faltered.

"Pe—Pe—Peter!" he exclaimed. The stranger leaped forward, and fell upon the old man's neck.

Betty heard the word *Peter*.—the clean cap fell from her hand, she uttered a scream of joy, and rushed to the door, her grey hairs falling over her face; and the next moment her arms encircled her son.

I need not tell you of the thousand anxious questions of the fond mother, and how she wept as he hinted at the misfortunes he had encountered, and smiled and wept, and grasped his hand again, as he dwelt upon his prosperity.

"Did I no aye say," exclaimed she, "that I would live to see my Peter a gentleman?"

"Yet, mother," said Peter, "riches cannot bring happiness—at least not to me, while I can hear nothing of poor Ann. Could no one tell to what part of America her father went? for I have sought them everywhere."

"Oh, forgie me, hinny," cried Betty, bitterly; "it was a mistake o' yer mother's a'thegither. I understand, now, it wasna America they gaed to; but it was Jamaica, or some *ca*, and we hear they're back again."

"Not America!" said Peter: "and back again! then, where—where shall I find her?"

"When we wrote to you, that, after leaving here, they had gaen to America," said Robin, "it was understood they had gaen there—at ony rate, they went abroad some-way—and we never heard, till the other week, that they were back to this country, and are now about Liverpool, where, I'm very sorry to hear, they are very ill off; for the world, they say, has gaen a' wrang wi' the auld man."

This was the only information Peter could obtain. They were bitter tidings; but they brought hope with them.

"Ye were saying that ye was in Liverpool the other day," added his mother; "I wonder ye didna see some o' them!"

Peter's spirit was sad, yet he almost smiled at the simplicity of his parent; and he resolved to set out in quest of his betrothed on the following day.

Leaving Foxlaw, we shall introduce the reader to Spar-

ling Street, in Liverpool. Amongst the miserable cellars where the poor are crowded together, and where they are almost without light and without air, one near the foot of the street was distinguished by its outward cleanliness; and in the window was a ticket with the words—*A Girls' School kept here, by A. GRAHAM.*" Over this humble cellar was a boarding-house, from which, ever and anon, the loud laugh of jolly seamen rang boisterous as in their own element. By a feeble fire in the comfortless cellar sat an emaciated, and apparently dying man; near him sat his wife, engaged in making such articles of apparel as the slop-dealers sent to the West Indies, and near the window was a pale but beautiful young woman, instructing a few children in needlework, and the rudiments of education. The children being dismissed, she began to assist her mother; and addressing her father, said—

"Come, cheer up, dear father—do not give way to despondency—we shall see better times. Come, smile now, and I will sing your favourite song."

"Heaven bless thee, my own sweet child!" said the old man, while the tears trickled down his cheeks. "Thou wilt sing to cheer me, wilt thou?—bless thee!—bless thee! It is enough that, in my old age, I eat thy bread, my child!—sing not!—sing not!—there is no music now for thy father's heart."

"Oh, speak not—think not thus," she cried, tenderly; "you make me sad too."

"I would not make thee sad, love," returned he, "but it is hard—it is very hard—that, after cruising till I had made a fortune, as I may say, and after being anchored in safety, to be tempted to make another voyage, where my all was wrecked—and not only all wrecked, but my little ones too—thy brothers and thy sisters, Ann—to see them struck down one after another, and I hardly left wherewith to bury them—it is hard to bear, child!—and, worse than all, to be knocked up like a useless hulk, and see thee and thy mother toiling and killing yourselves for me—it is more than a father's heart can stand, Ann."

"Nay, repine not, father," said she: He who tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb will not permit adversity to press on us more hardly than He gives us strength to endure it. Though we suffer poverty, our exertions keep us above want."

The old woman turned aside her head and wept.

"True, dear," added he, "thy exertions keep us from charity; but those exertions my child will not long be able to make—I see it—I feel it! And, oh, Ann, shall I see thee and thy mother inmates of a workhouse—shall I hear men call thy father Bill Graham, the old pauper?"

The sweat broke upon the old man's brow from his excitement; his daughter strove to soothe him, and, with assumed playfulness, commenced singing Skinner's beautiful old man's song, beginning:

"Oh, why should old age so much wound us!"

Now, Peter Paterson had been several days in Liverpool, anxiously inquiring for Captain Graham, but without obtaining any information of him or of his daughter, or where they dwelt. Again and again he had wandered along the docks; and he was disconsolately passing up Sparling Street, when the loud revelry of the seamen in the boarding-house attracted his attention. It reminded him of old associations; he paused for a moment, and glanced upon the house, and, as the pealing laughter ceased, a low, sweet voice, pouring forth a simple Scottish air, reached his ear. Peter now stood still. He listened—"That voice!" he exclaimed audibly, and he shook as he spoke. He looked down towards the cellar; the ticket in the window caught his eye. He read the words, "*A Girls' School kept here, by A. GRAHAM.*" "I have found her!" he cried, clasping his hands together. He rushed down the few steps, he stood in the midst of them—"I have found her!" he repeated, as he entered. His voice fell like a sunbeam on the cheerless heart of the fair vocalist. "Peter!—my own——" she exclaimed, starting to her feet. She could not utter more; she would have fallen to the ground, but Peter caught her in his arms.

I need not describe the scene that followed: that night they left the hovel which had served as a grave for their misfortunes. Within a week they had arrived at Foxlaw, and within a month old and young in the village danced at a joyful wedding. I may only add, that, a few weeks after his marriage, Peter read in the papers an advertisement, headed: "UPSET PRICE GREATLY REDUCED—*Desirable property in the neighbourhood of Foxlaw,*" &c. It was the very farm now offered for sale of which Peter was to have become a tenant some twelve years before, and was the remnant of the estates of the hopeful Laird Horslie; and Peter became the purchaser. The old skipper regained his wonted health and cheerfulness; and Betty Paterson lived to tell her grandchildren, "she aye said their faither wad be a gentleman, and her words cam true." Even the old schoolmaster, who had styled him "Ne'er-do-weel Peter," said he "had aye predicted o' Mr. Paterson, even when a callant, that he would turn out an extraordinary man."



SQUIRE BEN.



BEFORE introducing my readers to the narrative of Squire Ben, it may be proper to inform them who Squire Ben was. In the year 1816, when the piping times of peace had begun, and our heroes, like Othello, found "their occupation gone," a thickset, bluff, burly-headed little man—whose every word and look reminded you of Inledon's "*Cease, rude Boreas,*" and bespoke him to be one of those who had "sailed with noble Jervis," or,

"In gallant Duncan's fleet,
Had sung out, yo heave ho!"—

purchased a small estate in Northumberland, a few miles

from the banks of the Coquet. He might be fifty years of age; but his weather-beaten countenance gave him the appearance of a man of sixty. Around the collar of a Newfoundland dog, which followed him more faithfully than his shadow, were engraved the words, "Captain Benjamin Cookson;" but, after he had purchased the estate to which I have alluded, his poorer neighbours called him Squire Ben. He was a strange mixture of enthusiasm, shrewdness, courage, comicality, generosity, and humanity. Ben, on becoming a country gentleman, became a keen fisher; and, as it is said, "a fellow feeling makes one wondrous kind," I also, being fond of the sport, became a mighty favourite with the bluff-faced squire. It was on a fine bracing day in March, after a tolerable day's fishing, we went to dine and spend the afternoon in the Angler's Inn, which stands at the north end of the bridge over the Coquet, at the foot of the hill leading up to Longframlington. Observing that Ben was in good sailing trim, I dropped a hint that an account of his voyages and cruises on the ocean of life would be interesting.

"Ah, my boy," said Ben, "you are there with your soundings, are you? Well, you shall have a long story by the shortest tack. Somebody was my father," continued he, "but whom I know not. This much I know about my mother: she was cook in a gentleman's family in this county; and being a fat, portly body—something of the build of her son, I take it—no one suspected that she was in a certain delicate situation, until within a few days before I was born. Then, with very grief and shame, the poor thing became delirious; and, as an old servant of the family has since told me, you could see the very flesh melting off her bones. While she continued in a state of delirium, your humble servant, poor Benjamin, was born; and without recovering her senses, she died within an hour after my birth, leaving me—a beautiful orphan as you see me now—a legacy to the workhouse and the world. Benjamin was my mother's family name—from which I suppose they had something of the Jew in their blood; though, Heaven knows, I have none in my

composition. So they who had the christening of me gave me my mother's name of Benjamin as my Christian name; and, from her occupation as *cook*, they surnamed me Cookson; that is, 'Benjamin the Cook's son,' simply Benjamin Cookson, more simply, Squire Ben. Well, you see, my boy, I was born beneath the roof of an English squire, and, before I was three hours old, was handed over to the workhouse. This was the beginning of my life. The first thing I remember was hating the workhouse—the second was loving the sea. Yes, sir, before I was seven years old, I used to steal away in the noble company of my own good self, and sit down upon a rock on the solitary beach, watching the ships, the waves, and the sea-birds—wishing to be a wave, a ship, or a bird—ay, sir, wishing to be anything but poor orphan Ben. The sea was to me what my parents should have been—a thing I delighted to look upon. I loved the very music of its maddest storms; though, quietly, I have since had enough of them. I began my career before I was ten years of age, as cabin-boy in a collier. My skipper was a dare-devil, tear-away sort of fellow, who cared no more for running down one of your coasting craft, than for turning a quid in his mouth. But he was a good, honest, kind-hearted sort of chap for all that—barring that the rope's end was too often in his hand. 'Ben,' says he to me one misty day, when we were taking coals across the herring pond to the Dutchmen, and the man at the helm could not see half-way to the mast head—'Ben, my little fellow, can you cipher?' 'Yes, sir,' says I. 'The deuce you can!' says he; 'then you're just the lad for me. And do you understand logarithms?' 'No, sir,' says I; 'what sort of wood be they?' 'Wood be hanged! you blockhead!' said he, raising his foot in a passion, but with a smile on the corners of his mouth shoved it to the deck again, before it reached me. 'But come, Ben, you can cipher, you say; well, I know all about the radius and tangents, and them sort of things, and stating the question; but blow me if I have a multiplication table on board—my fingers are of no use at a long number, and I am always getting out of it counting by chalks;—so come below, Ben and look over the

question, and let us find where we are. I know I have made a mistake someway; and mark ye, Ben, if ye don't find it out—ye that can cipher—there's a rope's-end to your supper, and that's all.' Hows'ever, sir, I did find it out, and I was regarded as a prodigy in the ship ever after. The year before I was out of my apprenticeship, our vessel was laid up for four months, and our skipper sent me to school during the time, at his own expense, saying—'Get navigation, Ben, my boy, and you will one day be a commodore—by Jupiter, you'll be an honour to the navy.' I got as far as '*Dead Reckoning*,' and there I reckon I made a dead stand, or rather, I ceased to do anything but study '*Lunar Observations*.' Our owner had a daughter, my own age to a day. I can't describe her, sir; I haven't enough of what I suppose you would call poetry about me for that, but, upon the word of a sailor, her hair was like night rendered transparent—black, jet black; her neck white as the spray on the bosom of a billow; her face was lovelier than a rainbow; and her figure handsome as a frigate in full sail. But she had twenty thousand pounds—she was no bargain for orphan Ben! However, I saw her, and that was enough—learning and I shook hands. Her father had a small yacht—he proposed taking a pleasure party to the Coquet Isle. Jess—for that was her name—was one of the passengers, and the management of the yacht was entrusted to me. In spite of myself, I gazed on her by the hour—I was intoxicated with passion—my heart swelled as if it would burst from my bosom. I saw a titled puppy touch her fingers—I heard him prattle love in her ears. My first impulse was to dash him overboard. I wished the sea which I loved might rise and swallow us. I thought it would be happiness to die in her company—perhaps to sink with her arm clinging round my neck for protection. The wish of my madness was verified. We were returning. We were five miles from the shore. A squall, then a hurricane, came on—every sail was reefed—the mast was snapped as I would snap that pipe between my fingers;—(here the old Squire, suiting the action to the word, broke the end of his pipe;)—'the sea rose—the

hurricane increased, the yacht capsized, as a feather twirls in the wind. Every soul that had been on board was now struggling for life—buffeting the billows. At that moment I had but one thought, and that was of Jess; but one wish, and that was to die with her. I saw my fellow-creatures in their death agonies, but I looked only for her. At the moment we were upset, she was clinging to the arm of the titled puppy for protection; and now I saw her within five yards of me still clinging to the skirts of his coat, calling on him and on her father to save her; and I saw him—yes, sir, I saw the monster, while struggling with one hand, raise the other to strike her on the face, that he might extricate himself from her grasp. ‘Brute! monster!’ I exclaimed: and the next moment I had fixed my clenched hands in the hair of his head. Then, with one hand, I grasped the arm of her I loved; and, with the other, uttering a fiendish yell, I endeavoured to hurl the coward to the bottom of the sea. The yacht still lay bottom up, but was now a hundred yards from us; however, getting my arm round the waist of my adored Jess—I laughed at the sea—I defied the hurricane. We reached the yacht. Her keel was not three feet out of the water; and, with my right hand, I managed to obtain a hold of it. I saw two of the crew and six of the passengers perish; but her father, and the coward who had struck her from him, still struggled with the waves. They were borne far from us. Within half an hour I saw a vessel pick them up. It tried to reach us, but could not. Two hours more had passed, and night was coming on—my strength gave way—my hold loosened—I made one more desperate effort, I fixed my teeth in the keel—but the burden under my left arm was still sacred—I felt her breath upon my cheek—it inspired me with a lion’s strength, and for another hour I clung to the keel. Then the fury of the storm slackened; a boat from the vessel that had picked up her father reached us—we were taken on board. She was senseless, but still breathed—my arm seemed glued round her waist, I was almost unconscious of everything, but an attempt to take her from me. My teeth gnashed when they touched my

hand to do so. As we approached the vessel, those on board hailed us with three cheers. We were lifted on deck. She was conveyed to the cabin. In a few minutes I became fully conscious of our situation. Some one gave me brandy—my brain became on fire. ‘Where is she?’ I exclaimed—‘did I not save her?—save her from the coward who would have murdered her?’ I rushed to the cabin—she was recovering—her father stood over her—strangers were rubbing her bosom. Her father took my hand to thank me; but I was frantic—I rushed towards her—I bent over her—I pressed my lips to hers—I called her mine. Her father grasped me by the collar—‘Boy, beggar, bastard!’ he exclaimed. With his last word half of my frenzy vanished—for a moment I seized him by the throat—I cried, ‘Repeat the word!’—I groaned in the agony of shame and madness. I rushed upon the deck—we were then within a quarter of a mile from the shore—I plunged overboard—I swam to the beach—I reached it.”

I became interested in the narrative of the squire, and I begged he would continue it with less rapidity. “Rapidity!” said he, fixing upon me a glance in which I thought there was something like disdain—“youngster, if you cast a feather into the stream it will be borne on with it. But,” added he, in a less hurried tone, after pausing to breathe for a few moments—“after struggling with the strong surge for a good half-hour, I reached the shore. My utmost strength was spent, and I was scarcely able to drag myself a dozen yards beyond tide-mark, when I sank exhausted on the beach. I lay, as though in sleep, until night had gathered round me; and when I arose, cold and benumbed, my delirium had passed away. My bosom, however, like a galley manned with criminals, was still the prison-house of agonizing feelings, each more unruly than another. Every scene in which I had borne a part during the day rushed before me in a moment—her image—the image of my Jess, mingled with each; I hated existence—I almost despised myself; but tears started from my eyes—the suffocation in my breast passed away, and I again breathed freely. I will not trouble you with details. I will pass over the next five years of my life, during

which I was man-of-war's man, privateer, and smuggler. But I will tell you how I became a smuggler, for that calling I only followed for a week, and that was from necessity; but, as you shall hear, it well nigh cost me my life. Britain had just launched into war with France, and I was first mate of a small privateer, carrying two guns and a long Tom. We were trying our fortune within six leagues of the Dutch coast, when two French merchantmen hove in sight. They were too heavy metal for us, and we saw that it would be necessary to deal with them warily. So hoisting the Republican flag, we bore down upon them; but the Frenchmen were not to be had; and no sooner had we come within gunshot, than one of them saluted our little craft with a broadside that made her dance in the water. It was evident there was no chance for us but at close quarters. 'Cookson,' says our commander to me, 'what's to be done, my lad?' 'Leave the privateer,' says I. 'What!' says he, 'take the long boat and run, without singeing a Frenchman's whisker!—no, blow me,' says he. 'No, sir,' says I, 'board them—give them a touch of the cold steel.' 'Right, Ben, my boy,' says he; 'helm about there—look to your cutlasses, my hearties—and now for the Frenchman's deck, and French wine to supper.' The next moment we had tacked about, and were under the Frenchman's bow. In turning round, long Tom had been discharged, and clipped the rigging of the other vessel beautifully. The commander, myself, and a dozen more sprang upon the enemy's deck, cutlass in hand. Our reception was as warm as powder and steel could make it—the Frenchmen fought like devils, and disputed with us every inch of the deck hand to hand. But, d'ye see, we beat them aft, though their numbers were two to one; yet, as bad luck would have it, out of the twelve of us who had boarded her, only seven were now able to handle a cutlass; and amongst those who lay dying on the enemy's deck, was our gallant commander. He was a noble fellow, sir—a regular fire-eater, even in death. Bleeding, dying as he was, he endeavoured to drag his body along the deck to assist us—and when, finding it would not do, and he could move no further, he drew

a pistol from his belt, and raising himself on one hand, he discharged it at the head of the French captain with the other—and shouting out—‘Go it, my hearties!—Ben! never yield!’ his head fell upon the deck—and ‘he died like a true British sailor.’ But, sir, the other vessel that had been crippled, at that moment made alongside. Her crew also boarded to assist their countrymen, and we were attacked fore and aft. There was nothing now left for us but to cut our way to the privateer, which had been brought round to the other side of the vessel we had boarded. She had been left to the care of the second mate and six seamen; but the traitor, seeing our commander fall, and the hopelessness of our success, cut the lashings, and bore off, leaving us to our fate on the deck of the enemy. Our number was now reduced to five, and we were hemmed in on all sides, but we fought like tigers bereaved of their cubs. We placed ourselves heel to heel, we formed a little circle of death. I know not whether it was admiration of our courage, or the cowardice of the enemy, that induced them to proclaim a truce, and to offer us a boat, oars, and provisions and to depart with our arms. We agreed to their proposal, after fighting an hour upon their deck. And here begins my short but eventful history as a smuggler. We had been six hours at sea in the open boat, when we were picked up by a smuggling lugger named the *Wildfire*. Her captain was an Englishman, and her cargo, which consisted principally of brandy and Hollands, was to be delivered at Spittal and Boomer. It was about daybreak on the third morning after we had been picked up; we were again within sight of the Coquet Isle. I had not seen it for five years. It called up a thousand recollections—I became entranced in the past. My Jess seemed again clinging to my neck—I again thought I felt her breath upon my cheek—and again involuntarily I exclaimed aloud, ‘*She shall be mine.*’ But I was aroused from my reverie by a cry—‘A cruiser—a cutter ahead!’ In a moment the deck of the lugger became a scene of consternation. The cutter was making upon us rapidly; and though the *Wildfire* sailed nobly, her pursuer skimmed

over the sea like a swallow. The skipper of the lugger seemed to become insane as the danger increased. He ordered every gun to be loaded, and a six-oared gig to be got in readiness. The cutter fired on us, the *Wildfire* returned the salute, and three of the cutter's men fell. A few more shots were exchanged, and the lugger was disabled; her skipper and the Englishmen of his crew took the gig and made for the shore. In a few minutes more we were boarded by the commander of the cutter, and a part of her crew. I knew the commander's face; his countenance—his name—were engraved as with a sharp instrument on my heart. His name was Melton—the Honourable Lientenant Melton—my enemy—the man I hated—the titled puppy of whom I spoke—my rival for the hand of my Jess. He approached me—he knew me as I did him—we lost no love between us—I heard his teeth grate as he fixed his eyes on me, and mine echoed to the sound.

‘Slave!—scoundrel!’ were his first words—‘we have met again at last, and your life shall pay the forfeit—place him in irons.’—‘Coward!’ I hurled in his teeth a second time, and my hand grasped my cutlass, which in a moment flashed in the air. His armed crew sprang between us—I defied them all—he grew bold under their protection. ‘Strike him down!’ he exclaimed, and, springing forward, his sword entered my side—but scarce was it withdrawn ere *his* blood streamed from the point of my cutlass to my hand. Suffice it to say, I was overpowered and disarmed—I was taken on board his cutter and put in irons. And now, sir,” continued the Squire, raising his voice, for the subject seemed to wound him, “know that you are in the company of a man who has been condemned to die—yes, sir, to die like a common murderer on the gallows! You start—but it is true; and if you like not the company of a man for whom the hangman once provided a neckerchief, I will drop my story.”—I requested him to proceed. “Well, sir,” continued he, “I was lodged in prison. I was accused of being a smuggler—of having drawn my sword against one of his Majesty’s officers—of having wounded him. On the testimony of my enemy

and his crew, I was tried and condemned—condemned to die without hope of pardon. I had but a day to live, when a lady entered my miserable cell. She came to comfort the criminal, to administer consolation in his last hour. I was in no mood to listen to the admonitions of the female Samaritan, and I was about to bid her depart from me. Her face was veiled, and in the dim twilight of my dungeon I saw it not. But she spoke, and her voice went through my soul like the remembrance of a national air which we have sung in childhood, and hear it in a foreign land. ‘Lady!’ I exclaimed, ‘what fiend hath sent thee? Come ye to ask me to forgive my murderer?—if *you* command it I will.’ ‘I would ask you to forgive your enemies,’ replied she, mildly; ‘but not for my sake.’ ‘Yet it can only be for *your* sake,’ said I; ‘but tell me, lady, are you the *wife* of the man who has pursued me to death?’ ‘No—not his wife.’ ‘But you will be?’ cried I, hastily; ‘and you love him—tell me, do you not love him?’ She sighed—she burst into tears. ‘Unhappy man,’ she returned, ‘what know you of me that you torment me with questions that torture me?’ I thrust forth my fettered hand—I grasped hers—‘Tell me, lady,’ I exclaimed, ‘before my soul can receive the words of repentance which you come to preach—tell me—do you *love* him?’—‘No!’ she pronounced emphatically, and her whole frame shook. ‘Thank God!’ I cried, and clasped my fettered hands together. ‘Forgive me, lady, forgive me! Do you know me—I am Ben—orphan Ben—the boy who saved you!’—She screamed aloud—she fell upon my bosom, and my chained arm once more circled the neck of my Jess.

“Yes, sir, it was my own Jess, who, without being conscious who I was, had come to visit the doomed one in his miserable cell, to prepare him for death, by pointing out the necessity of repentance and the way to heaven. I need not tell you that the moment my name was told she forgot her mission: and as, with my fettered arms, I held her to my breast, and felt her burning tears drop upon my cheek, I forgot imprisonment, I forgot death—my very dungeon became a heaven that I would not have exchanged for a

throne—for, oh! as her tears fell, and her heaving bosom throbbed upon my heart, each throb told me that Jess loved the persecuted orphan—the boy who saved her. I cannot tell you what a trance is; but, as I clung round her neck, and her arms encircled mine, I felt as if my very soul would have burst from my body in ecstasy. She was soon convinced that I was no criminal—that I had been guilty of no actual crime—that I was innocent and doomed to die. ‘No! no! you shall not die!’ sobbed my heroic girl—‘hope! hope! hope!—the man who saved me shall not die!’ She hurried to the door of my cell—it was opened by the keeper, and she left me, exclaiming, ‘Hope!—hope!’ On that day his then Majesty, George III., was to prorogue Parliament in person. He was returning from the House of Lords; crowds were following the royal procession, and thousands of spectators lined Parliament Street, some showing their loyalty by shouts and the waving of hats and of handkerchiefs, and others manifesting their discontent in sullen silence, or half-suppressed murmurs. In the midst of the multitude, and opposite Whitehall, stood a private carriage, the door of which was open, and out of it, as the royal retinue approached, issued a female, and, with a paper in her hand, knelt before the window of his Majesty’s carriage, clasping her hands together as she knelt, and crying—‘Look upon me, sire——!’ ‘Stop!—stop!’ said the King—‘coachman, stop!—what—a lady kneeling, eh—eh? A young lady, too!—poor thing—poor thing—give me the paper.’ His Majesty glanced at it—he desired her to follow him to St. James’s. I need not dwell upon particulars; that very night my Jess returned to my prison with my pardon in her hand, and I left its gloomy walls with her arm locked in mine. And now you may think that I was the happiest dog alive—that I had nothing more to do but to ask and obtain the hand of my Jess—but you are wrong; and I will go over the rest of my life as briefly as I can. No sooner did her father become acquainted with what she had done than he threatened to disinherit her—and he removed her I knew not where. I became first desperate,

then gloomy, and eventually sank into lassitude. Even the sea, which I had loved from my first thought, lost its charms for me. I fancied that money only stood between me and happiness—and I saw no prospect of making the sum I thought necessary at sea. While in the privateer service, I had saved about two hundred pounds in prize money. With this sum as a foundation, I determined to try my fortune on shore. I embarked in many schemes; in some I was partially successful—but I persevered in none. It was the curse of my life that I had no settled plan—I wanted method; and let me tell you, sir, that the want of a systematic plan, the want of method, has ruined many a wise man. It was my ruin. From this cause, though I neither drank nor gamed, nor seemed more foolish than my neighbours, my money wasted like a snowball in the sun. Though I say it myself, I was not an ignorant man—for, considering my opportunities, I had read much, and I had as much worldly wisdom as most of people. In short, I was an excellent framer of plans at night; but I wanted decision and activity to put them into execution in the morning. I had also a dash of false pride and generosity in my composition, and did actions without considering the consequences, by which I was continually bringing myself into difficulties. This system, or rather this want of system, quickly stripped me of my last shilling, and left me the world's debtor into the bargain. Then, sir, I gnashed my teeth together—I clenched my fist—I could have cut the throat of my own conscience, had it been a thing of flesh and blood, for spitting my thoughtlessness and folly in my teeth. I took no oath—but I resolved, firmly, resolutely, deeply resolved, to be wise for the future; and, let me tell you, my good fellow, such a resolution is worth twenty hasty oaths. I sold my watch, the only piece of property worth twenty shillings that I had left, and with the money it produced in my pocket, I set out for Liverpool. That town or city, or whatever you have a mind to call it, was not then what it is now. I was strolling along by the Duke's little Dock, and saw a schooner of about a hundred and sixty tons burden.

Her masts lay well back, and I observed her decks were double laid. I saw her character in a moment. I went on board—I inquired of the commander if he would ship a hand. He gave me a knowing look, and inquired if ever I had been in the *trade* before. I mentioned my name and the ship in which I had last served. ‘The deuce you are!’ he said; ‘what! you Cookson!—ship you, ay, and a hundred like you, if I could get them.’ I need hardly tell you the vessel was a privateer. Within three days the schooner left the Mersey, and I had the good fortune to be shipped as mate. For two years we boxed about the Mediterranean, and I had cleared, as my share of prize-money, nearly a thousand pounds. At that period, our skipper thinking he had made enough, resigned the command in favour of me. My first cruise was so successful that I was enabled to purchase a privateer of my own, which I named the *Jess*. For, d’ye see, her idea was like a never-waning moonlight in my brain—her emphatic words, ‘Hope!—hope!—hope!’ whispered eternally in my breast—and I did hope. Sleeping or waking, on sea or on shore, a day never passed but the image of my *Jess* arose on my sight, smiling and saying—‘Hope!’ In four years more I had cleared ten thousand pounds, and I sold the schooner for another thousand. I now thought myself a match for *Jess*, and resolved to go to the old man—her father, I mean—and offer to take her without a shilling. Well, I had sold my craft at Plymouth, and, before proceeding to the north, was stopping a few days in a small town in the south-west of England, to breathe the land air—for my face, you see, had become a little rough, by constant exposure to the weather. Well, sir, the windows of my lodging faced the jail, and for three days I observed the handsomest figure that ever graced a woman, enter the prison at meal-times. It was the very figure—the very gait of my *Jess*—only her appearance was not genteel enough. But I had never seen her face. On the fourth day I got a glimpse of it. Powers of earth! it was her!—it was my *Jess*! I rushed down stairs like a madman—I flew to the prison-door and knocked. The

jailer opened it. I eagerly inquired who the young lady was that had just entered. He abruptly replied—‘The daughter of a debtor.’ ‘For Heaven’s sake,’ I returned, ‘let me speak with them.’ He refused. I pushed a guinea into his hand, and he led me to the debtor’s room. And there, sir—there stood my Jess—my saviour—my angel—there she stood, administering to the wants of her grey-haired father. I won’t, because I can’t, describe to you the tragedy scene that ensued. The old man had lost all that he possessed in the world; his thousands had taken wings and flown away, and he was now pining in jail for fifty; and his daughter, my noble Jess, supported him by the labours of her needle. I paid the debt before I left the prison, and out I came, with Jess upon one arm, and the old man on the other. We were married within a month. I went to sea again; but I will pass over that; and when the peace was made we came down here to Northumberland, and purchased a bit of ground and a snug cabin, about five miles from this, and there six little Cooksons are romping about, and calling my Jess their mother, and none of them orphans, like their father, thank Heaven! And now, sir, you have heard the narrative of Squire Ben, what do you think of it?”



TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS.



IT was in the autumn of 1825 that a stranger was wandering by the side of the silver lakes and over the majestic mountains of romantic Cumberland. He was near the side of Blue Keswick, and the light wind was scattering, in showers, the death-touched leaves upon the bright waters. Suddenly, the face of the lake became troubled, and dark ripples rose upon its bosom, as if the chained spirit of a

storm struggled thereon to be free, and moved them. A louder rustling and a sound of agitation was heard among the trees, as though it were there also. Thick clouds gathered before the face of the sun, and darkness, like an angel's wrath, rolled along the brow of the mighty Skiddaw. In a few moments the thunder was heard bursting from the mountain sides, and its echoes reverbed, as the groaning of the great hills, through the glens—thunder, lightning, and tempest gathered round, and burst over the stranger. The cattle crowded together upon the hills, and the birds of heaven sought shelter in the woods. The stranger, also, looked around for a place of refuge.

Before him, at the distance of about a quarter of a mile, lay a sequestered and beautiful villa—round which mountain, wood, and water, and craggy cliff were gathered—with a sloping lawn before it. It was a spot which the genius of romance might have made its habitation. The mansion was in keeping with the scenery, and towards it the stranger repaired for shelter.

He was requesting permission of a servant of the household, to be sheltered until the storm passed over, when the occupier of the mansion came himself to the door, and with the frankness of an old friend held out his hand, saying—“Come in—thou art welcome. At such a time the birds of heaven seek shelter, and find it in the thick branches of the woods; and surely man has a right to expect refuge in the habitations of his fellow-men. Follow me, friend, and rest here until the storm be past.”

The stranger bowed, thanked him, and followed him; but, ere they had sat down, the owner of the mansion again addressed his visitant, saying—“The inhabitants of the East ask no questions of strangers until they have given them water to wash their feet, and a change of garments, if required. I know no excuse which the people of the West can offer why they should be less hospitable. I perceive that thy apparel is already drenched; therefore, my servant will provide thee with a change of raiment. Go, do as I request, that no harm overtake thee; and in the meantime

I will order refreshment, after which thou and I shall converse together."

There was a kindness in the manner, and an expression of benevolence in the aspect of the entertainer, which at once gratified and interested the stranger. The latter appeared to be about forty; but his hospitable entertainer was at least threescore. Care had engraven some wrinkles upon his brow, and the "silverings" of age were beginning to mingle thickly with his once brown hair; but his ruddy and open countenance spoke of the generosity of his disposition, and the health of his constitution.

When the stranger had put on dry raiment and partaken of food, his host ordered liquors to be brought; and when they were placed upon the table, he again addressed his guest, and said—"Here, sir, thou hast claret, port, and sherry—my cellar affords no other wines. Therefore take thy choice. Be merry and wise; but, above all—be at home. The wayfaring man, and the man whom a storm drives into our house among the mountains, should need no second invitation. With me he is welcome to whatsoever is set before him. Therefore use no ceremony, but consult thine own taste. For myself, I am no wine-drinker. Its coldness agrees not with my stomach, and I prefer the distillation of our northern hills to the juice of the grapes of the sunny south. Therefore, friend, while I brew my punch help thyself to whatsoever best pleaseth thee."

The stranger again thanked him, and having something of nationality about him, preferred joining him in a bowl prepared from the "mountain dew." They quickly discovered that they were what the world calls "kindred spirits," and, before an hour had passed, the stranger told whence he came, and where he had been, and what his intentions in visiting that part of the country were; but his name, he said, he did not intend to divulge to any one for a time. He might make it known in a few days, should he remain in the neighbourhood, and perhaps he never would.

"Well," said his host, "thou hast told me a considerable part of thy history, but thou hast withheld thy name: I will

tell thee *all* mine, but, to be even with thee, thou shalt not know my name either (provided thou dost not know it already), beyond that my Christian name is Robert."

"I am," continued he, "the first-born of a numerous family, and am twenty-four years older than the youngest of my parents' children. My father was what is called a 'statesman' in this part of the country; by which you are not to understand that he was in any way connected with politics, or had any part in governing the affairs of the nation, but simply, that he was the possessor of an estate containing some eighty acres, and which had descended to him from his ancestors, unimpaired and unencumbered. He was a kind husband and an indulgent father; but he was provident as neither. A better-hearted man never breathed. He was generous even to the committing of a crime against his own family; and the misfortune, the error—I might say the curse of his life—was, that he never knew the value of a shilling. It has been said that I possess my father's failing in this respect; but, through his example at all times as a warning before me, I have been enabled to regulate it, and to keep it within controllable limits. You have often heard it said, "Take care of the shillings, and the pounds will take care of themselves;" but this will not hold good in every instance—as was the case with my father. He appeared to be one of those who did not stop to consider the value between a pound and a shilling. He was naturally a man of a strong intellect and a sound judgment; but his impulses were stronger still. He was a being of impulses. They hurried him away, and he stopped not to consult with calmer reason. With him, to feel was to act. He generally saw and repented his error before another had an opportunity of telling him of it, but not before it was too late; and these self-made discoveries never prevented him from falling into the same errors again. In the kindness of his own heart he took all mankind to be good; he believed them to be better than they really were; or rather he believed no man to be a bad man until he had found him to be so. Now, sir, when I say that in this respect my father exercised too

much both of faith and charity, thou must not think that I am shut up here like a cynic in this mountain solitude, to inflict upon every passenger my railings against his race. On the contrary, I have seen much of the world, and experienced much of its buffetings, of its storms, its calms, and its sunshine; I have also seen much of men; and I have seldom, I would almost say, I have never, met with one who had no redeeming quality. But, sir, I have seen and felt enough to trust no man far until I have proved him. Yet my father was many times deceived, and he trusted again; and, if not the same parties, others under the same circumstances. He could not pass a beggar on the highway without relieving him: and, where he saw or heard that distress or misery existed, it was enough for him—he never inquired into the cause.

He was bringing up his family, not certainly in affluence, but in respectability; but his unthinking generosity, his open hand, and his open-heartedness were frequently bringing him into trouble. One instance I will relate; it took place when I was a lad of eighteen. There resided in our neighbourhood an extensive manufacturer, who employed many people, and who was reputed to be very rich. He was also a man of ostentatious piety; and young as I then was, his dragging forward religion in every conversation, and upon all occasions, led me to doubt whether he really had anything of religion in his heart. There were many, also, who disputed his wealth. But my father and he were as brothers. We perceived that he had gained an ascendancy over him in all things; and often did my mother remonstrate with him for being, as she said, led by a stranger, and caution him against what might be the consequences. For I ought to tell you that the manufacturer had been but a few years in Cumberland, and no one knew his previous history. But my father would not hear the whisper of suspicion breathed against him.

My mother was a native of Dumfriesshire; her ancestors had taken a distinguished part in the wars of the Covenant, and one evening I was reading to her from her favourite

volume, "The Lives of the Scots Worthies," when my father entered, and sat down in a corner of the room in silence, and evidently in deep sorrow. He leaned his brow upon his hand, and his spirit seemed troubled.

"William," said my mother, addressing him, "why do ye sit there? What has happened? There is something putting ye about."

He returned no answer to her inquiries; and approaching him, and taking his hand in hers, she added, "Oh! there is something the matter, or ye would never sit in that way, and have such a look. Are ye weel enough, William—or what is it?"

"Nothing! nothing!" said he. But the very manner in which he said it, and the trembling and quavering of his voice, were equivalent to saying, "Something! something!"

"Oh, dinna say to me, nothing!" said she; "for there is a something, and that is evident, or ye would never sit as ye are doing."

He struck his clenched hands upon his brow, and exclaimed, "Do not torment me! do not add to my misery!"

"William! William!" cried my mother, "there is something wrong, and why will ye hide it from me? Have I been your wife for twenty years, and ye say I torment ye now by my anxiety for your weelfare? O William! I am certain I didna deserve this treatment from you, neither did I think that ye were capable of acting in such a manner. What is it that is troubling ye?"

"Nancy," he cried, in the vehemence of despair, "I have ruined you!—I have ruined my family! I have ruined my earthly comfort, my peace of mind, and my own soul!"

"Oh, dinna talk in that way, William!" she cried; "I ken now that something serious has happened; but, oh! whatever it be, let us bear it like Christians, and remember that we are Christians. What is it, William? Ye may confide in your wife now?"

"Nancy," said he, "I never was worthy of such a wife. But neither look on me, nor speak to me with kindness. I have brought you to beggary. I have brought my family

to beggary—and I have brought myself to everlasting misery and despair!”

“Oh, my dear!” said she, “dinna talk in such a heathen-like manner. If it be the case that we have lost all that we had, there is no help for it now; but I trust, and am assured, that ye will not have lost it in such a way as to make your family hang their head among folk, in remembrance of their father’s transaction. I am certain, already, that it is your foolish disposition to be everybody’s friend, that has brought this upon ye. A thousand times have I warned ye of what, some day or other, would be the upshot; but ye would take no admonition from me.”

“Oh!” added he, “I have misery enough, and more than enough, without your aggravating it by your dagger-drawing reflections.”

He sat groaning throughout the night, with his hand upon his brow; but the real cause of his misery he would not explain, farther than that he had brought himself and his family to ruin. But, with sunrise, the tale of our undoing was on every tongue; and all its particulars, and more than all, were not long in being conveyed to us. For a tale of distress hath the power of taking unto itself wings, and every wind of heaven will echo it, let it come whence it may, and let it go whence it may. I beheld, and I heard my mother doomed to hear the doleful congratulations of her friends—the prompt expression of their sympathy for her calamities. It was the first time, and it was the last, that many of them ever felt for human woe. But there are people in this world who delight to go abroad with the tidings of tribulation on their tongue, and whose chief pleasure is to act the part of Job’s comforters, or, I might say, of his messengers.

We learned that my father’s bosom friend, the professedly wealthy and pious manufacturer, had been declared a bankrupt, and that my father had become liable on his account to the amount of two thousand pounds. His unguided generosity had previously compelled him to mortgage his property, and this calamity swallowed it up. Never will

I forget the calmness, I might call it the philosophy, with which my mother received the tidings.

"I am glad," said she to the individual who first communicated to her the tidings, "that my children will have no cause to blush for their father's misfortunes; and I would rather endure the privations which those misfortunes may bring upon us, than feel the pangs of his conscience who has brought them upon his friend."

My father sank into a state of despondency, from which it required all our efforts to arouse him; and his despondency increased when it was necessary that the money for which he had become liable should be paid. The estate, which had been in the possession of his ancestors for a hundred and fifty years, it became necessary to sell; and when it was sold, not only to the last acre, but even to our household furniture, it did not bring a sum sufficient to discharge the liabilities which he had incurred. Well do I remember the soul-harrowing day on which the sale took place. My father went out into the fields, and in a small plantation, which before sunset was no longer to be his, sat down and wept. Even my mother, who hitherto had borne our trials with more than mere fortitude, sat down in a corner of the house, upon the humblest chair that was in it, and which she perhaps thought they would not sell, or that it would not be worth their selling, and there, with an infant child at her bosom, she rocked her head in misery, and her secret tears bedewed the cheeks of her babe.

That night my father, my mother, and their children sought refuge in a miserable garret in Carlisle. I, as I have already said, was the eldest, and perhaps the change in their circumstances affected me most deeply, and by me was most keenly felt.

Through yielding to the influence of feelings that were too susceptible, my father beheld his family suddenly plunged into destitution. It was a sad sight to behold my brothers, and my sisters, who had ever been used to plenty, crying around him, and around my mother, for bread to eat, when they were without credit, and their last coin was expended

My father did not show the extreme agony of his spirit before his children, but he could not conceal that it lay like a cankerworm in his breast, preying upon his vitals. His strength withered away like a leaf in autumn; and what went most deeply to my mother's heart was, that he seemed as if ashamed to look his family in the face; and he appeared even as one who had committed a crime which he was anxious to conceal.

My mother, however, was a woman amongst ten thousand. Never did the slightest murmur escape her lips, to upbraid my father for what he had brought upon us; but, on the contrary, she daily, hourly, strove to cheer him, and to render him happy—to make him forget the past. But it was a vain task; misery haunted him by night and by day; there was despair in his very smile, and the teeth of self-reproach entered his soul. He was a man who had received more than what is called a common education; and a gentleman who had been his schoolfellow, and known him from his childhood, and who resided much abroad, appointed him to be his land steward. The emoluments of the office were not great, but they were sufficient to keep his family from want.

Under the circumstances in which they were now placed, I was too old to remain longer as a burden upon my parents. I therefore bade them a fond, a heart-rending farewell; and, with less than four pounds in my pocket, took my passage from Whitehaven to Liverpool, from whence I was to proceed by land to London. Liverpool was then only beginning to emerge into its present commercial magnitude; and I carried with me letters to two merchants there, the one residing in Poole Lane, the other in Dale Street. Both received me civilly, and both asked me *what I could do*? It was a question which I believed had never occurred to me before, nor even to my father, up to the period of my shaking hands with him and bidding him farewell. I hesitated for a few seconds, and I believe that upon both occasions I stammered out the word—*anything*.

"You can do *anything*, can you?" said the first merchant,

sarcastically; "then you are a great deal too clever for me; and I suspect the situation of a servant of *all work* will suit you better than that of a clerk in a counting-house. Pray, are you acquainted with keeping books?"

I replied that I was not.

"Then," added he, "though you can do anything, that is one thing which I find you cannot do; and as it is the only thing that would be of any service to me, I shall not be able to avail myself of your otherwise universal attainments."

The cold, the sarcastic manner of this gentleman made my very blood freeze within my veins; a cold shivering (I might call it the mantle of despair) came over me, and my heart failed within me. I, however, proceeded to Dale Street, and delivered my letters to the other gentleman. He, as I have already intimated to you, inquired of me what I could do. And to him, also, my unfortunate answer was *anything*. He smiled, but there was a kindness in his smile, and he good-humouredly asked me what I meant by anything. I was as much at a loss to answer him as I had been to answer the merchant I had left.

"Have you ever been in a merchant's office?" he inquired, "or had any practice as an accountant?"

"No," I replied.

"Then," added he, "I fear it will be difficult to find anything in Liverpool to answer your expectations, and I would not recommend you to waste time in it. If I could have promoted your views, I would have done so most cheerfully; but, as I cannot, here are three guineas—for, from the manner in which my friend speaks of you in his letter, I believe you to be a deserving youth—they will help you onward in your journey, and in London you will meet with many chances of obtaining a situation that you cannot find in Liverpool."

I burst into tears as he spoke and put the money in my hands. The kindness of the merchant had affected me more than the chilling irony of the other. The one roused my indignation, the other melted my heart. But I was indebted

to both; for both had given me a lesson of what the world was, and both had rendered me more sensible of the dependence and hopelessness of my situation.

In order to husband my resources, I proceeded to London on foot, and when I arrived there, I found myself to be like a bird in a wilderness, or a helmless vessel on a dark sea. The magnitude of the city, its busy thousands, its groaning warehouses, where the treasures and luxuries of every corner of the globe are piled together, the splendour of its shops, the magnificence of its squares, and the lordly equipages which glittered in the midst of them, moved me not. They scarcely excited my observation. My soul was filled with thoughts of my own prospects; and I wandered, dreaming, from street to street, moving at a pace as though I had been sauntering by the side of one of my native lakes, and I appeared as the only individual in the great city who had no aim, and no urgent business which required me to move rapidly, as others did. I delivered all the letters that I brought with me, and I was again asked, as I had been in Liverpool,—*what I could do?* But I did not, as I did there, reply *anything*. I, however, was puzzled how to answer the question. The truth was, I was utterly ignorant of business. I had been brought up amongst those mountains with merely a knowledge that there was such a thing. In fact, my ideas of it hardly extended beyond giving out goods with one hand, and receiving money for them in the other. The word *commerce* was to me as a phrase in a dead language. I had fancied to myself that the sea was a great lake, over the whole expanse of which I should be able to gaze at once, and see the four quarters of the globe around it; and my ideas of what ships were, were gathered from the boats which I had seen upon Keswick. On the day on which I left my parents' roof, I heard my old schoolmaster console them with the assurance, that "there was no fear of me, for *I was fit for anything*." While such testimony, from his lips, comforted them, it cheered me also, and it caused me to look upon myself as a youth of high promise, and of yet higher expectations. But now, when I was left to myself, with all my talents and

acquirements ready to be disposed of in any market, I found that my general qualifications, my fitness for anything, amounted to be qualified for nothing, when reduced to particulars. Days, weeks, months passed away, and I was still a wanderer upon the streets of the modern Babylon.

At length, when ready to lie down and die from hunger and from hopelessness, I obtained a situation as copying-clerk to a solicitor, at a salary of ten shillings a week. In such a city as London, and where it was necessary to keep up a respectable appearance, this sum might be considered as inadequate to my wants. But it was not so. During the first ten weeks, I transmitted two pounds to my parents, to assist them. I always kept the proverb before my memory, that "a penny saved is a penny gained;" and I never took one from my pocket until I had considered whether or not it was absolutely necessary to spend it. My food was of the simplest kind; and finding that I could not afford the expense of an eating-house, it consisted of a half-quartern loaf in the twenty-four hours, the one-half of which was ate in the morning, the other in the evening. I *kitchened* my loaf, as they say in Scotland, with a pennyworth of butter, and occasionally with lettuce or a few radishes in their season; and the beverage with which I regaled myself, after my meals, was a glass of water from the nearest pump.

Upon this diet I became stouter, and was more healthy for the time, than ever I had been before; though I believe I have suffered for it since. It was my duty to lock up the office or chambers, as they were called, at night, and to open them in the morning. I had not been many days in my situation, when the thought struck me, that, by locking myself within the chambers at night, instead of locking myself out, I might save the expense of a lodging. Again I said to myself that "a penny saved was a penny gained," and four chairs in the chamber became my couch, while the money which I would have given for a lodging was transmitted to my parents.

I had not been many months in this situation, when it was my fortune to render what he considered a service to a rich

merchant in the city, who was a client to my employers. He made inquiry of me respecting the amount of my salary, and concerning my home and relatives. I found that he was from Westmoreland, and he offered me a situation in his counting-house, with a salary of eighty pounds a year. My heart sprang in joy and in gratitude to my throat at his proposal. I seized his hand as though he had been my brother. I pressed it to my breast. A tear ran down my cheek and fell upon it. Even while I held his hand, I fancied to myself that I beheld my parents and their children again sitting beneath the sunshine of independence, and blessing their first-born, who was "fit for anything."

I entered upon my new situation, and upon my income of eighty pounds a year, in a few days, and received a quarter's salary in advance. I well knew that my father was still oppressed by liabilities, which he was endeavouring to discharge out of the forty pounds a year, which he received for his stewardship. I knew, and I felt also, that let a son do for a parent what he will, he can never repay a parent's love and a parent's cares. Who could repay a mother for her unceasing and anxious watchings over us in the helplessness of infancy, or a father in providing for all our wants, in teaching us to know good from evil? I fancied that thirty pounds a year was enough, and more than enough, for all my wants, and I dwelt with fondness on the thought of remitting them fifty pounds out of my annual salary. Previous to entering the counting-house of the merchant, my delight at the pleasing anticipations before me robbed me of sleep, and for the first time caused me to feel the hardness of my bed upon the chairs of the solicitor's chamber.

However, with a heart overflowing with joy, I entered upon my mercantile avocations. Then, as I bustled along the streets, I felt within my heart as though in all London there was none greater than I; I was independent as the Lord Mayor—as happy as his Majesty. But there was one thing, a small matter which I forgot—it was the proverb which I have twice quoted already, that "a penny saved is a penny gained." On leaving my occupation as a copying-

clerk, I almost unconsciously left also my cheap and humble diet. My fellow-clerks in the merchant's counting-house dined every day at a chop-house in Milk Street, and they requested me to join them. I had no longer an opportunity of eating my half loaf in secret, and I accompanied them. Each of us had generally a chop, for which we paid eightpence; a fried sole, for which we were charged a shilling; with a glass of porter during dinner, and a go of gin, as it was called, and sometimes *two*, afterwards. I did not wish to be singular, neither did I see how I could avoid doing as others did; and, moreover, I reasoned that, with eighty pounds a year, I was justified in living comfortably. But this was not all. My associates were in the habit of having their crust and cheese, and their glass of porter, in the forenoons; and I had to join them in this also. And this, too, ran away with pence which might have been saved. But I had not been long amongst them when I found that they had also evening clubs, where they met to enjoy a pipe and a glass, and hear the news of the day. Unless I joined one of these clubs, I found that I would be considered as—nobody. I accompanied a comrade to one of them, and as the glass, the song, and the merry jest went round, I was as a person ushered into a new world, delighted with all I saw. I became a nightly attender of the club; and although I never indulged to excess, I had completely forgotten the proverb which enabled me to assist my parents when I had but ten shillings a week, and therefore it forgot me.

My landlady also informed me, that it was the rule of her establishment for her lodgers to breakfast in the house, and with this proposal, also, I deemed it necessary to comply. I had begun to yield to circumstances, and when, in such a case, the head is once bent, the whole body imperceptibly becomes prostrate.

But twelve months passed away, and instead of fifty pounds being sent to my parents, I found my entire eighty not only expended, but that I was ten pounds in debt. I called myself a fool, a madman, and many other names; for conscience burned within my bosom, and the glow of shame

upon my cheek. But it was fruitless; a habit had been formed, and that habit was my master. I had involuntarily become its slave, and wanted resolution to become its master.

On entering upon my second year, my employer, who still retained a favourable opinion of me, increased my salary to a hundred a year. But even when it had expired, instead of having assisted my parents, I still found myself in debt. I had left my twenty pounds of additional salary to take care of themselves, and at the same time I had forgotten to take care not only of the shillings which composed them, but of the pence which made up my whole income. I forgot that a hundred pounds quickly disappears in a free hand and leaves its owner wondering whither it has gone. At this period, the letters which I received from my parents sometimes indirectly hinted at the privations which they were enduring; but they never requested, or seemed to expect, assistance from me. The consciousness of their circumstances, however, stung me to the soul; but it did not reclaim me, or turn me from the dark sea of thoughtless expenditure on which I had embarked. I experienced that a slight thread is sufficient to lead a man to temptation, but it requireth a strong cord and a strong hand to drag him again to repentance.

I seldom laid my head upon my pillow but I resolved that, on the following day, I would reform my course of life and again practise economy. But, alas! I "resolved and re-resolved," and lived the same. At this period, however, my own conscience was my only accuser and tormentor. For although in a country town my habit of spending every evening with a club at a tavern, might have been registered against me as a vice, in London it did not so militate, and was neither noted nor regarded. I was punctual in my attendance at the counting-house—always clean, and rather particular in my person; and I must say, that I do not know a town on the face of the habitable globe, where the certificate of dandyism, or of something approaching to it, will be of greater service to a young man than in London.

It has struck me a hundred times, that the two chief recommendations for obtaining a situation there, are *dress* and *address*. I was not exactly what could be called a good-natured person, but there was a free-and-easy something about my disposition which rendered me a favourite with my fellow-clerks. I also was pleased with their society, and it was seldom that I could resist the temptation of accompanying them wheresoever they went, when solicited, and which was in general to all their parties of pleasure. When I said to myself, in the language of Burns—"Come, go to, I will be wise," and began to practise retrenchment in one item of my expenditure, I heedlessly plunged into other sources equally extravagant. For my old maxim, which had proved a friend to me on my first coming to London, was completely forgotten; and I neither thought of saving a penny, nor taking care of a shilling. Indeed, so far had I forgotten these maxims, that on many occasions I reasoned with myself, saying—"Oh, it is *only* a shilling or two—there's nothing in that. I will go, or I will do it." But I forgot the sum to which that *only*, repeated three hundred and odd times in the year, amounted. In short, I had fallen into a habit which would have prevented me, had my salary been a thousand a year, from being either richer or happier than I was when I had but ten shillings a week.

I, however, retained the good opinion of my employer; and, in the third year of my engagement with him, I was sent as supercargo with a vessel to South America. It was to be a trading voyage, and the appointment conferred upon me was an honour which caused me to be envied by the other clerks in the counting-house. Some of my seniors sneered at my inexperience, and said that I would bring home a "precious cargo, and a profitable account of my transactions." Those who were nearer my own age saw nothing in me that I should have been chosen by our employer, and they agreed that he had preferred me merely because I was a Border man like himself. In truth, I wondered at his choice myself; for I was conscious of but few qualifications for the

task imposed on me, and although, three years before, I was thought, and considered myself—"fit for anything."

It was understood that our voyage would occupy between two and three years; and, in order that I might provide myself with everything necessary for my lengthened travels on the sea, and my dealings on shore, my employer placed in my hands two hundred and fifty pounds, independent of letters of credit to foreign merchants in various ports in which I was to transact business.

But, on the very day on which I received the two hundred and fifty pounds, and about five days before I was to leave England, I received a letter from my father to the following import:—

"MY DEAR SON,—It pains me to be the bearer to you of evil tidings, and the more so as I know that they can only grieve you, and that it is not in your power to remove their cause. Yet it is meet that you should know of them. You knew, and you felt the effects of the misfortunes which a few years ago overwhelmed me; but you knew not their extent. They still weigh me to the earth—they blast my prospects, and render powerless my energies. Yet there is no one whom I can accuse for my misfortunes; they, and the distresses of my family, are the work of my own hands. Tomorrow I will be the inmate of a prison for a debt of two hundred pounds which still hangs over me. Your poor mother, and your brothers and sisters, will be left with no one to provide for them. Think of them, my dear son, and, if it be in your power, assist them."

Such was my father's letter, and every word in it went to my bosom as a sharp instrument. I took two hundred pounds from the two hundred and fifty that had been given me to provide for my voyage, and transmitted them to my father, to relieve him from his distress. I perhaps acted unthinkingly, and sent more than I ought to have sent—but what will not a son do for a parent when his heart is touched?—and, at all events, I acted as he to whom the money was sent would have acted—from the impulse of the

moment, in obedience to the first, the natural dictates of the heart.

I found that I had deprived myself of the power of obtaining many things which were necessary for the voyage, but I rejoiced at the thought of having given liberty to a parent, and happiness to his family; and my spirit enjoyed a secret triumph, which more than counterbalanced any trials I might have to endure.

But the day on which I was to leave Old England arrived, and within four days I saw its white cliffs sink and die away in the distance as a far-off cloud. We had been seven weeks at sea, when a strange vessel hove in sight, and made alongside of us. She had a suspicious appearance, and our captain pronounced her to be a pirate. As she drew nearer we could perceive that her crew crowded her deck; and as she continued to bear down upon us there could be little doubt of her intentions. Our deck was cleared and our few guns put in readiness for action. We were the heavier vessel of the two, but she carried three guns for our one, and it was evident her crew were almost as ten to one. When the captain had seen everything made ready for action, he requested me to follow him to the cabin for a few minutes, and when there he said—"Robert," for my Christian name I will communicate to you, "the pirate which is now bearing down upon us is making three knots for our two. Within a quarter of an hour you will hear her shot whiz over us. I don't care so much for both our lives being endangered, for I know already that both our lives are *sold*; but I regret the issue of this *venture* for your sake and for my own, and also for that of our owner, for I am certain it would have proved a good one to us all. However, we must all heave-to in deep water or in shallow water some time or other, and the tide has overtaken you and me to-day. Therefore, my lad, don't let us look miserable about the matter. Only I have to tell you (lest I should be one of the first to be swept off the deck when the business of the day begins), that our old owner, who, Heaven bless him! is a regular trump, said to me, just as I had got my papers from the Custom House, and he was

shaking hands with me—"Tom," said he (for the old fellow always called me Tom), "look after that supercargo of mine that yon've got on board. He is a countryman of my own. Ho does not know it, but his father and I used to paddle on Keswick lake together. I have liked him on that account since the first day I clapped my eyes on him, and therefore, I took him into my employ. But, though he didn't think that I saw it, I saw that the chaps of London were too much for him. Therefore, I say, Tom," said he, "if you see him like to go too far, for the love I bear the boy bring him up with a short cable." Such, you see, my lad, is the love which our old owner has for you; and though you may have found him a little gruff now and then (as I have done myself), depend upon it he is a regular trump at the bottom. Therefore I say, let us fight for him now, as better is not to be, until we go to the bottom."

I felt a glow about my heart on account of the kindness of my master, and especially when I found that he was aware of more than I thought he had discovered of my conduct while in London; but it was no time to indulge in a reverie of gratitude, when every moment I expected to hear a twenty-four-pounder boom over our deck, and that, too, from the deck of a pirate, who did not chalk up mercy as one of his attributes.

I went upon deck with our captain, and I had not been there for five minutes when a shot from the pirate damaged our rigging. At the same time she hoisted the black flag.

"It is all up, Boh," said our commander, addressing me; "let us die manfully. If I die first, sink the vessel before she falls into their hands."

"Trust to me, captain," cried I; "I will see that all is right. We shall win the day, or go to the bottom."

"Bravo, my hearty!" he exclaimed; "I wish you had been a sailor!"

The action now began in good earnest, and was kept up on either side with unyielding determination. But they fired three guns for our one, and ever and anon they made an attempt to board us. Our crew consisted of but fourteen

men and three boys—the commander, the mate, and myself included. The mate fell at the first broadside which our enemy poured into us. We maintained the unequal fight for near an hour, when our captain also fell, calling out to me—“Stand out, Bob!—sink her, or beat them!”

“I will, captain!” cried I; but I don’t believe that he lived to hear what I said to him. Our ship’s company was reduced to five able men, and I lay amongst the wounded upon deck. We were boarded, overpowered in a moment, and our vessel became the prize of the pirates. The dead, and some of the wounded amongst our crew, were thrown overboard upon the instant. My appearance pleaded for me with the murderers (even as I have heard appearance pleads with a prevailing intercession on most occasions in London), and in a state of unconsciousness I was borne on board their vessel. When I raised my eyes and became conscious of my situation, the pirate captain stood over me. My wounds had been bound up, and I aroused myself, and rose up in pain as one awoke from a dream.

“Your name!—your name!” said he, addressing me.

“Ha! we are captured, then!” replied I; “my name is of small consequence—I am your victim.”

“Speak!” he cried vehemently—“you wrong me. You are our captives, but I wish to know your name. You are an Englishman—are you from Cumberland?—Were you not at the school of old Dominie Lindores?”

“I am—I was!” I gasped in agony.

“And do you,” he continued—“do you remember the boy who, before he was eighteen, and while he was a boarder at the school, ran to Gretna with an heiress from a neighbouring seminary.”

“I do!—I do remember it!” I cried.

“And what,” he exclaimed—“*what was his name?*”

“Belford!” said I.

“Belford!” he cried—“it was indeed Belford. I am not deceived! You are, indeed, my countryman. You are younger than I, but I remember you; I am the Belford of whom you have spoken. For auld langsyne, and for the

sake of bonny Cumberland, no harm shall happen unto you, nor to any of your comrades. I have but one thing to say to you—*be obedient.*”

Pained and wounded as I was, I remembered him. I recollected him as having been a boy, some six years older than myself, at the same school, and in a senior class. But when I would have questioned him he placed his fingers upon his lips, and said, “Speak no more to me at present. Do as I have said—*be obedient.*”

I thought it a strange thing to be placed a prisoner under the hatches of an old schoolfellow; but the assurance that he and I had trembled under the same birch, and played on the same hill-side together, gave me, with his promise of safety, some consolation. My hands were permitted to be at liberty, but my feet were ordered to be kept in irons; and when I went upon the deck I could not step more than six inches at a time. I knew not how my fellow-prisoners fared, for I never saw them.

One day I was requested, or rather I ought to say ordered, to dine with the pirate-captain.

“Your name is Robert,” said he to me; and I answered that it was.

“Well,” he continued, “I wish to save your life, and if it were possible I would spare also your comrades. But there would be danger in doing so, and my fellows, whom I must sometimes humour, are to a man against it. I will try, however, either to place you on board a vessel that is not worth shot, or on some island where you are certain of being picked up. In the meantime, here is a purse for you, which you will find will do you more good on shore than any services of mine. A father and a mother’s care,” he added, “I have never known, and from rumour only do I suppose who my parents were. I owe mankind nothing for the kindness they have shown me; and the same love and mercy which I have received from them, I have measured out to them again. Farewell!” he said, and left me.

I knew that he was the reputed son of a gentleman who had held extensive possessions in Cumberland, but that

something of mystery hung over his birth, and that it was reported cruel and unjust means had been resorted to, to deprive him of his lawful inheritance.

His words produced no pleasant feeling in my mind. I found myself in the situation of a person who was pinioned to a certain spot, with a sword suspended over his head by a single hair. But while he spoke I fancied that I heard the sighs of a female in distress. When he left me they were repeated more audibly. I went towards a door in the cabin which led to an apartment from whence the sound seemed to proceed. I attempted to open the door of the chamber, which was unlocked, and I entered it. Before me sat a lady whose age appeared to be below twenty. She raised her eyes towards me as I entered, and tears ran down her cheeks. Till then I had never seen a face so beautiful, and I will add, or felt beauty's power—I felt as if suddenly ushered into the presence of a being who was more than mortal.

Our interview I will not describe. We spoke little; and the words which we did speak were in low and hurried whispers. For we heard the sound of our tyrant's feet pacing over our head, and to have found us in conversation together might have been death to both. Almost without knowing what I said, or for lack of other words, I spoke of the possibility of our escape. A faint smile broke through her tears, and she twice waved her hand silently, as if to say, "It is hopeless!—it is hopeless!"

From that moment she was present in all my thoughts; when awake she became the one idea of my mind, and in sleep she was the object of my dreams. As I was indulged with some degree of liberty, we met frequently, and although our interviews were short, they were as "stolen water," or as "bread eaten in secret." Their existence was brief, but their memory long. I had informed her of my early acquaintance with the pirate commander, and of all that passed between us from the time of my becoming his prisoner. And when she had heard all, even she indulged in the dream that our escape might be possible.

It was about a week after my discovery of the fair captive,

that I ascertained that two of those who had become prisoners with myself had joined the pirates, and the others had been cast into the sea. My fate their captain still left undecided. My anxiety to escape increased tenfold; but how it was to be accomplished was a question which for ever haunted me, but which I could never answer.

One day we came in contact with a Dutch lugger, laden with Hollands. The pirates boarded her, but they only *bled* the vessel, as they termed it; they did not take the whole cargo; with what they did take, however, they made a merry carousal: they first became uproarious in their mirth, and eventually they sobered down into a state in which a child might have bound them. I observed the change that was wrought upon them—I saw the advantage I had gained; my thoughts became fixed upon how to profit by it.

It was midnight—the moon of an eastern sky flashed upon the sea—the very waters of the mighty deep moved in silence. The few stars that were in the heavens were reflected back from its bosom. On board the vessel not a living creature stirred; the very man at the helm had fallen down as if dead. With the fetters upon my feet, I stood alone, the master of a dead crew. I seized an instrument that lay upon the deck, and endeavoured to unfasten the irons that fettered me. I succeeded in the attempt. It was with difficulty that I restrained from bursting into a shout of joy. But I recollected my situation. I stole on tiptoe to the cabin—I opened the door of the apartment where the fair captive was confined.

“Our hour is come,” I whispered in her ear; “we must escape—follow me.”

She started and would have spoken aloud, but I placed my finger on her lips, and whispered—“Be silent.”

“I come, I come,” she said. She followed me, and we ascended to the deck, and stood alone in the midst of the wild ocean, without knowing whither to direct our course. I unfastened the stern-boat and lowered it into the sea. I descended into it with her beneath my arm, and cutting asunder the rope with which I had fastened it, I pulled away from

the vessel, which was unto us both a prison-house. My arm was nerved with the strength of despair, and within a few hours I had lost sight of the pirate ship. At daybreak on the following day we were alone in the midst of the vast and solitary sea; and desperate as our situation then was, I felt a glow of happiness at the thought that I should be enabled either to save her life or to risk mine to save her in whom, from the time that I had first seen her, my whole soul had become involved. I now felt and knew that it was in my power to serve her, that our fates were united; and, when I beheld her alone with me upon the wide ocean, I felt as though her life had been given into my hands, and we both were secure. The thought in which I indulged was realized. We scarce had been twelve hours upon the sea when a vessel passed us at the distance of scarce a mile. I made signals, that she might discover us, and they were observed. She was bound for London, and we were taken on board. I may say that it was now that my acquaintance with the fair being whom I had rescued from the hands of those who would have destroyed her, began. Her beauty grew upon my sight as a summer sun increaseth in glory; and the more that I beheld it, the more did I become enchained by its power. It was now for the first time that I ventured to make inquiry concerning her name and birth; when I ascertained that her name was Charlotte Hastings; and, upon further inquiry, discovered that she was the niece, and the supposed heiress, of the merchant in whose employment I was. On making this discovery, my tongue became dumb. I felt that I loved her because that I had delivered her from death, or from what would have been worse than death. But when I knew that she was my superior in circumstances—the heiress of him in whose employment I was—I stood before her and was dumb. But there was a language in my eyes while my tongue was silent; and though I spoke not, I had reason to know that she understood its meaning—for often I found her dark eyes anxiously fastened upon me; and while she gazed, the tears stole down her cheeks.

We arrived in London. On the day of our arrival, I went towards her, and said—"Madam, we must part."

"Part!" she exclaimed, "wherefore?—tell me wherefore?"

"There is a gulf between our stations," I answered, "which I cannot pass." She then knew nothing of my being but a clerk in her uncle's office, and I was resolved that she never should know. "Charlotte," I said, on first addressing her after landing, "fate has cast us together—in some degree it has mingled our destiny; yet we must part. Fate has gambolled with us—it has mocked us with a child's game. We must part now, not to meet again. Farewell! I could have dreamed in your eyes—yea, I could have lived in the light that fell from them; but, Charlotte, it was not to be my lot—that happiness was reserved for others. We came to this country together; the wind and the waves spared us, and wed us. The troubled sea did not divide us. We escaped from the hands of our destroyers, and fate recorded us as one. But it may be necessary that we should part—for I know the difference between our stations; and, if it be so, despise not him that saved you."

Her uncle heard of our captivity and escape with the coldest indifference. Not a muscle of his face moved. The variation of a fraction in the price of the funds would have interested him more.

"I thank you," said he, "for having restored my kinswoman to freedom. Hereafter, it may be in my power to reward you for the act. In the meantime, you must undertake another voyage to the Brazils, which I trust will prove more fortunate than your last."

I had only been fourteen days in London, when, another vessel being fitted out, I was ordered again to embark. During that period, and from the day that I conducted her to her uncle's house, I had not been permitted to see the fair being whom I had rescued; nor did my employer, though I saw him daily, once mention her name to me, or in any way allude to her. Yet during that period, by day and by night, her image had been ever present to my thoughts. There

was a singularity in the conduct of the merchant with regard to her which surprised me. I resolved, before my departure, to ask his permission to bid her farewell. I did so.

"Young man," replied he, "romantic thoughts do not accord with the success of a merchant, and with romantic adventures he has but little to do. You imagine that you love my niece, and she, perhaps, entertains the same foolish thoughts concerning you. It is a delusion arising from the circumstances under which you have become acquainted; but it will pass away as a reflection from the face of a mirror, and leave no trace of existence. When you return, you may see her again, but not now."

Lovers are proverbial for their lack of patience, and this assuredly was putting mine to trial. But I knew the temper of the man with whom I had to deal, and, yielding to necessity, I sailed without seeing her.

I had been absent for more than two years, and prospered exceedingly in all my dealings. On my return homeward I had to visit Genoa. On the day of my arrival there, a person accosted me on the street by name. Without seeing the speaker when he accosted me, I started at his voice, for I remembered it well. It was Belford the pirate.

"Well," said he, in a sort of whisper, "I give you credit for the manner in which you effected your escape. But you robbed me of a prize which should not have been ransomed for less than a thousand pounds. And, before we part," added he gravely, "you shall give me your hand and seal to pay me that sum on the day that she becomes your wife."

I could not forbear a smile at the strange demand, and said that it should be readily complied with, if ever the event of which he spoke took place; but of that, I assured him, there was but small hope.

"Fool!" said he, "know ye not that the old merchant, her father, intends that ye shall be wed on your arrival in England? And think ye that I know not that ye are to succeed him in business?"

"Her father!" I exclaimed—"of whom do you speak? I know him not. Or do you speak only to mock me?"

"By my right hand," said he, "I speak seriously, and the truth. She believes, and you believe, that she is the niece of old Hastings, your master. She is his daughter—the only daughter of a fair but frail wife, who eloped from him while his child was yet an infant, leaving it to his care. In order to forget the shame which his frail partner had brought upon him, he, from that day, refused to see his girl, lest her features should remind him of her mother. The girl was sent to Boulogne, where she remained till within two months of the time when you saw her on board of my good privateer. You look astonished," added he—"does my narrative surprise you?"

"It does indeed surprise me," I replied; "but how come you to know these things?"

"Oh," replied he, "I know them, and require but small help from divination. Nine years ago I was commander of one of old Hastings's vessels; and because I was a native of the Borders, forsooth, I, like you, was a favourite with him. He entrusted me with the secret of his having a daughter. Frequently, when I had occasion to put into Boulogne, I carried her presents from him. He also ordered me to bring him over her portrait, and, when the old boy took it in his hands, and held it before his face, he wept as though he had been a child. He used me crookedly at last, however; for he accused me of dishonesty, and attempted to bring me to punishment. I was then as honest as noonday—and on land I am honest still, although I have done some bold business upon the high seas. I made a vow that I would be revenged upon him, and, but that you thwarted me, I would have been revenged. I ran my brig into Boulogne. I pretended that I had a message to Miss Hastings from her father, or, as I termed him, her uncle, and that she was to accompany me to England. As I had frequently been the bearer of communications from him before, my tale was believed. She accompanied me on board the brig, and we sailed, not for England, but on a roving cruise, as a king of the open

sea. I was resolved that no harm should befall her; but I also had determined that she should not again set her foot upon land until her father came down with a thousand pounds as a ransom. Of that thousand pounds you deprived me. But on your marriage-day—at the very altar—payment will be demanded. It is not for myself that I desire it,” said he, seriously, “for I am a careless fellow, and am content with what the sea gives to me; but I have a son in Cumberland, who will now be about seven years of age. His mother is dead, for my forsaking her broke the poor thing’s heart, and hurried her to the grave. My son, I believe, is now the inmate of a workhouse. It is better that he should remain there, than be trained to the gallows by his father. Yet I should wish to see him provided for, and your wife’s ransom shall be his inheritance. Give me your bond, and when you again see this dagger, be ready to fulfil it.”

As he spoke he exhibited a small poniard, which he carried concealed beneath his coat. I conceived that his brain was affected, and merely to humour him I agreed to his strange demand.

His words gave birth to wild thoughts, and with an anxious heart I hastened to return to England. My employer received me as though I had not been absent for a week.

“You have done well,” he said; “I am satisfied with your undertaking. You did not this time meet with pirates, nor captive damsels to rescue.” I hesitated to reply, and I mentioned that I had met and spoken with the pirate commander at Genoa.

He glanced at me sharply for a moment, and added—
“Merchants should not converse with robbers.”

He sat thoughtful for the space of half an hour, and then requested me to accompany him into his private office. When there, he said—

“You inform me that you have again seen Belford, the pirate, and that you have spoken with him. What said he to you? Tell me all—conceal nothing.”

I again hesitated, and sought to evade the subject. But he added, more decisively—"Speak on—hide nothing—fear nothing."

I did tell him all, and he sat and heard me unmoved.

When I concluded, he took my hand and said—"It is well you have spoken honestly. Listen to me. Charlotte is indeed my daughter. Time has not diminished your affection for each other, which I was afraid was too romantic in its origin to endure. I have put your attachment to each other to severe trials; let it now triumph. Follow me," he added, "and I will conduct you to her."

I was blind with happiness, and almost believed that what I heard was but a dream—the fond whispering of an excited brain. I will not describe to you my interview with my Charlotte; I could not—words could not. It was an hour of breathless, of measureless joy. She was more beautiful than ever, and love and joy beamed from her eyes.

Our wedding-day came—her father placed her hands in mine, and blessed us. We were leaving the church, when a person in the porch, whose figure was wrapt up in a cloak approached me, and revealing the point of a dagger, whispered—"Remember your bond!"

It was Belford, the daring pirate. I kept faith with him and he received the money.

I will not detain you longer with my history, with my Trials and Triumphs. One of the first acts of my Charlotte was to purchase the estate which had been torn from my father, and she presented it to him as his daughter's gift. On retiring from business, I came to reside on it, and built on it this house, which has sheltered you from the storm.

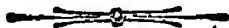
"And your name?" said the listener, "is Mr. Melvin?"

"It is," replied the host.

"Then startle not," continued the stranger, "when you hear that mine is Belford! I am the son of the pirate. My father died not as he had lived. When upon his deathbed, he sent for me, and on leaving me his treasure, which was considerable, he commanded me to repay you the thousand

pounds which he so strangely exacted from you. From the day on which he received it, he abandoned his desperate course, and through honest dealings became rich. I have brought you your money, with interest up to the present time."

So saying, the stranger placed a pocket-book in the hands of his entertainer, and hastily exclaiming "Farewell!" hurried from the house, and was no more heard of.



THE VACANT CHAIR.



YOU have all heard of the Cheviot Mountains. If you have not, they are a rough, rugged, majestic chain of hills, which a poet might term the Roman wall of nature; crowned with snow, belted with storms, surrounded by pastures and fruitful fields, and still dividing the northern portion of Great Britain from the southern. With their proud summits piercing the clouds, and their dark rocky declivities frowning upon the glens below, they appear symbolical of the wild and untamable spirits of the Borders who once inhabited their sides. We say, you have all heard of the Cheviots, and know them to be very high hills, like a huge clasp riveting England and Scotland together; but we are not aware that you may have heard of Marchlaw, an old, grey-looking farm-house, substantial as a modern fortress, recently, and for aught we know to the contrary, still inhabited by Peter Elliot, the proprietor of some five hundred surrounding acres. The boundaries of Peter's farm, indeed, were defined neither by fields, hedges, nor stone walls. A wooden stake here, and a stone there, at considerable distances from each other, were the general landmarks; but neither Peter nor his neighbours considered a few acres worth quarrelling about; and their sheep fre-

quently visited each other's pastures in a friendly way, harmoniously sharing a family dinner, in the same spirit as their masters made themselves free at each other's tables.

Peter was placed in very unpleasant circumstances, owing to the situation of Marchlaw House, which, unfortunately, was built immediately across the "ideal line" dividing the two kingdoms; and his misfortune was, that, being born within it, he knew not whether he was an Englishman or a Scotchman. He could trace his ancestral line no farther back than his great-grandfather, who, it appeared from the family Bible, had, together with his grandfather and father, claimed Marchlaw as their birthplace. They, however, were not involved in the same perplexities as their descendant. The parlour was distinctly acknowledged to be in Scotland, and two-thirds of the kitchen were as certainly allowed to be in England; his three ancestors were born in the room over the parlour, and, therefore, were Scotchmen beyond question; but Peter, unluckily, being brought into the world before the death of his grandfather, his parents occupied a room immediately over the debatable boundary line which crossed the kitchen. The room, though scarcely eight feet square, was evidently situated between the two countries; but, no one being able to ascertain what portion belonged to each, Peter, after many arguments and altercations upon the subject, was driven to the disagreeable alternative of confessing he knew not what countryman he was. What rendered this confession the more painful was, it was Peter's highest ambition to be thought a Scotchman. All his arable land lay on the Scotch side; his mother was collaterally related to the Stuarts; and few families were more ancient or respectable than the Elliots. Peter's speech, indeed, betrayed him to be a walking partition between the two kingdoms, a living representation of the Union; for in one word he pronounced the letter *r* with the broad masculine sound of the North Briton, and in the next with the liquid *burr* of the Northumbrians.

Peter, or, if you prefer it, Peter Elliot, Esquire, of Marchlaw, in the counties of Northumberland and Roxburgh, was, for many years, the best runner, leaper, and wrestler, be-

tween Wooler and Jedburgh. Whirled from his hand, the ponderous bullet whizzed through the air like a pigeon on the wing; and the best putter on the Borders quailed from competition. As a feather in his grasp, he seized the unwieldy hammer, swept it round and round his head, accompanying with agile limb its evolutions, swiftly as swallows play round a circle, and hurled it from his hands like a shot from a rifle, till antagonists shrunk back, and the spectators burst into a shout. "Well done, Squire! the Squire for ever!" once exclaimed a servile observer of titles. "Squire! wha are ye squiring at?" returned Peter. "Confound ye! where was ye when I was christened Squire? My name's Peter Elliot—your man, or onybody's man, at whatever they like!"

Peter's soul was free, bounding, and buoyant as the wind that carolled in a zephyr, or shouted in a hurricane, upon his native hills; and his body was thirteen stone of healthy, substantial flesh, steeped in the spirits of life. He had been long married, but marriage had wrought no change upon him. They who suppose that wedlock transforms the lark into an owl, offer an insult to the lovely beings who, brightening our darkest hours with the smiles of affection, teach us that that is only unbecoming in the husband which is disgraceful in the man. Nearly twenty years had passed over them; but Janet was still as kind, and, in his eyes, as beautiful, as when, bestowing on him her hand, she blushed her vows at the altar; and he was still as happy, as generous, and as free. Nine fair children sat round their domestic hearth, and one, the youngest of the flock, smiled upon his mother's knee. Peter had never known sorrow; he was blest in his wife, in his children, in his flocks. He had become richer than his fathers. He was beloved by his neighbours, the tillers of his ground, and his herdsmen; yea, no man envied his prosperity. But a blight passed over the harvest of his joys, and gall was rained into the cup of his felicity.

It was Christmas Day, and a more melancholy-looking sun never rose on the 25th of December. One vast sable

cloud, like a universal pall, overspread the heavens. For weeks, the ground had been covered with clear, dazzling snow; and, as, throughout the day, the rain continued its unwearied and monotonous drizzle, the earth assumed a character and appearance melancholy and troubled as the heavens. Like a mastiff that has lost its owners, the wind howled dolefully down the glens, and was re-echoed from the caves of the mountains, as the lamentations of a legion of invisible spirits. The frowning, snow-clad precipices were instinct with motion, as avalanche upon avalanche, the larger burying the less, crowded downward in their tremendous journey to the plain. The simple mountain rills had assumed the majesty of rivers; the broader streams were swollen into the wide torrent, and, gushing forth as cataracts, in fury and in foam, enveloped the valleys in an angry flood. But, at Marchlaw, the fire blazed blithely; the kitchen groaned beneath the load of preparations for a joyful feast; and glad faces glided from room to room.

Peter Elliot kept Christmas, not so much because it was Christmas, as in honour of its being the birthday of Thomas, his first-born, who that day entered his nineteenth year. With a father's love, his heart yearned for all his children; but Thomas was the pride of his eyes. Cards of apology had not then found their way among our Border hills; and as all knew that, although Peter admitted no spirits within his threshold, nor a drunkard at his table, he was, nevertheless, no niggard in his hospitality, his invitations were accepted without ceremony. The guests were assembled; and the kitchen being the only apartment in the building large enough to contain them, the cloth was spread upon a long, clear, oaken table, stretching from England into Scotland. On the English end of the board were placed a ponderous plum-pudding, studded with temptation, and a smoking sirloin; on Scotland, a savoury and well-seasoned haggis, with a sheep's head and trotters; while the intermediate space was filled with the good things of this life, common to both kingdoms and to the seasons.

The guests from the north, and from the south, were

arranged promiscuously. Every seat was filled—save one. The chair by Peter's right hand remained unoccupied. He had raised his hands before his eyes, and besought a blessing on what was placed before them, and was preparing to carve for his visitors, when his eyes fell upon the vacant chair. The knife dropped upon the table. Anxiety flashed across his countenance, like an arrow from an unseen hand.

"Janet, where is Thomas?" he inquired; "hae nane o' ye seen him?" and, without waiting an answer, he continued—"How is it possible he can be absent at a time like this? And on such a day too? Excuse me a minute, friends, till I just step out and see if I can find him. Since ever I kept this day, as mony o' ye ken, he has always been at my right hand, in that very chair; and I canna think o' beginning our dinner while I see it empty."

"If the filling of the chair be all," said a pert young sheep-farmer, named Johnson, "I will step into it till Master Thomas arrive."

"Ye're not a faither, young man," said Peter, and walked out of the room.

Minute succeeded minute, but Peter returned not. The guests became hungry, peevish, and gloomy, while an excellent dinner continued spoiling before them. Mrs. Elliot, whose good-nature was the most prominent feature in her character, strove, by every possible effort, to beguile the unpleasant impressions she perceived gathering upon their countenances.

"Peter is just as bad as him," she remarked, "to hae gane to seek him when he kenned the dinner wouldna keep. And I'm sure Thomas kenned it would be ready at one o'clock to a minute. It's sae unthinking and unfriendly like to keep folk waiting." And endeavouring to smile upon a beautiful black-haired girl of seventeen, who sat by her elbow, she continued, in an anxious whisper—"Did ye see naething o' him, Elizabeth, hinny?"

The maiden blushed deeply; the question evidently gave freedom to a tear, which had for some time been an unwilling prisoner in the brightest eyes of the room; and the

monosyllable "No," that trembled from her lips, was audible only to the ear of the inquirer. In vain Mrs. Elliot despatched one of her children after another in quest of their father and brother; they came and went, but brought no tidings more cheering than the meaning of the hollow wind. Minutes rolled into hours, yet neither came. She perceived the prouder of her guests preparing to withdraw, and, observing that "Thomas's absence was so singular and unaccountable, and so unlike either him or his father, she didna ken what apology to make to her friends for such treatment; but it was needless waiting, and begged they would use no ceremony but just begin."

No second invitation was necessary. Good humour appeared to be restored, and sirloins, pies, pasties and moor-fowl, began to disappear like the loe eon. For a moment, Mrs. Elliot apparently partook in the restoration of cheerfulness; but a low sigh at her elbow again drove the colour from her rosy cheeks. Her eye wandered to the farther end of the table, and rested on the unoccupied seat of her husband, and the vacant chair of her first-born. Her heart fell heavily within her; all the mother gushed into her bosom; and rising from the table, "What in the world can be the meaning o' this?" said she, as she hurried, with a troubled countenance, towards the door. Her husband met her on the threshold.

"Where hae ye been, Peter?" said she, eagerly; "hae ye seen naething o' him?"

"Naething! naething!" replied he; "is he no cast up yet?" And with a melancholy glance, his eyes sought an answer in the deserted chair. His lips quivered, his tongue faltered.

"Gude forgie me!" said he; "and such a day for even an enemy to be out in! I've been up and down every way that I can think on, but not a living creature has seen or heard tell o' him. Ye'll excuse me, neighbours," he added, leaving the house; "I must awa again, for I canna reet."

"I ken by mysel', friends," said Adam Bell, a decent-looking Northumbrian, "that a father's heart is as sensitive as the apple o' his e'e, and I think we would show a want o'

natural sympathy and respect for our worthy neighbour if we didna every one get his foot into the stirrup, without loss o' time, and assist him in his search. For, in my rough, country way o' thinking, it must be something particularly out o' the common that could tempt Thomas to be amissing. Indeed, I needna say *tempt*, for there could be no inclination in the way. And our hills," he concluded, in a lower tone, "are no owre chancy in other respects, besides the breaking up o' the storm."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Elliot, wringing her hands, "I have had the coming o' this about me for days and days. My head was growing dizzy with happiness, but thoughts came stealing upon me like ghosts, and I felt a lonely soughing about my heart, without being able to tell the cause; but the cause has come at last! And my dear Thomas—the very pride and staff o' my life—is lost!—lost to me for ever!"

"I ken, Mrs. Elliot," replied the Northumbrian, "it is an easy matter to say compose yourself, for them that dinna ken what it is to feel. But, at the same time, in our plain country way o' thinking, we are always ready to believe the worst. I've often heard my faither say, and I've as often remarked it myself, that, before anything happens to a body, there is a *something* comes owre them, like a cloud before the face o' the sun; a sort o' dumb whispering about the breast from the other world. And, though I trust there is naething o' the kind in your case, yet, as you observe, when I find myself growing dizzy, as it were, with happiness, it makes good a saying o' my mother's, poor body! 'Bairns, bairns,' she used to say, 'there is owre muckle singing in your heads to-night; we will have a shower before bed-time.' And I never in my born days saw it fail."

At any other period, Mr. Bell's dissertation on presentiments would have been found a fitting text on which to hang all the dreams, wraiths, warnings, and marvellous circumstances that had been handed down to the company from the days of their grandfathers; but, in the present instance, they were too much occupied in consultation regarding the different routes to be taken in their search.

Twelve horsemen, and some half-dozen pedestrians, were seen hurrying in divers directions from Marchlaw, as the last faint lights of a melancholy day were yielding to the heavy darkness which appeared pressing in solid masses down the sides of the mountains. The wives and daughters of the parties were alone left with the disconsolate mother, who alternately pressed her weeping children to her heart, and told them to weep not, for their brother would soon return; while the tears stole down her own cheeks, and the infant in her arms wept because its mother wept. Her friends strove with each other to inspire hope, and poured upon her ear their mingled and loquacious consolation. But one remained silent. The daughter of Adam Bell, who sat by Mrs. Elliot's elbow at table, and shrunk into an obscure corner of the room. Before her face she held a handkerchief wet with tears. Her bosom throbbed convulsively; and, as occasionally her broken sighs burst from their prison-house, a significant whisper passed among the younger part of the company.

Mrs. Elliot approached her, and taking her hand tenderly within both of hers—"O hinny! hinny!" said she, "yer sighs gae through my heart like a knife! An' what can I do to comfort ye? Come, Elizabeth, my bonny love, let us hope for the best. Ye see before ye a sorrowin' mother!—a mother that fondly hoped to see you an'—I canna say it!—an' am ill qualified to gie comfort, when my own heart is like a furnace! But oh! let us try and remember the blessed portion, 'Whom the LORD loveth HE chasteneth,' an' inwardly pray for strength to say, 'His will be done!'"

Time stole on towards midnight, and one by one the unsuccessful party returned. As foot after foot approached, every breath was held to listen. "No, no, no!" cried the mother, again and again, with increasing anguish, "it's no the foot o' my ain bairn;" while her keen gaze still remained riveted upon the door, and was not withdrawn, nor the hope of despair relinquished, till the individual entered, and, with a silent and ominous shake of his head, betokened his fruitless efforts. The clock had struck twelve; all were returned save the father. The wind howled more wildly; the rain

poured upon the windows in ceaseless torrents; and the roaring of the mountain rivers gave a character of deeper ghostliness to their sepulchral silence; for they sat, each rapt in forebodings, listening to the storm; and no sounds were heard, save the groans of the mother, the weeping of her children, and the bitter and broken sobs of the bereaved maiden, who leaned her head upon her father's bosom, refusing to be comforted.

At length the barking of the farm-dog announced footsteps at a distance. Every ear was raised to listen, every eye turned to the door; but, before the tread was yet audible to the listeners—"Oh, it is only Peter's foot!" said the miserable mother, and, weeping, rose to meet him.

"Janet! Janet!" he exclaimed, as he entered, and threw his arms round her neck, "what's this come upon us at last?"

He cast an inquisitive glance around his dwelling, and a convulsive shiver passed over his manly frame, as his eye again fell on the vacant chair, which no one had ventured to occupy. Hour succeeded hour, but the company separated not; and low sorrowful whispers mingled with the lamentations of the parents.

"Neighbours," said Adam Bell, "the morn is a new day, and we will wait to see what it may bring forth; but, in the meantime, let us read a portion o' the Divine Word, an' kneel together in prayer, that, whether or not the daydawn cause light to shine upon this singular bereavement, the Sun o' Righteousness may arise wi' healing on his wings, upon the hearts o' this afflicted family, an' upon the hearts o' all present."

"Amen!" responded Peter, wringing his hands; and his friend, taking down the Ha' Bible, read the chapter wherein it is written—"It is better to be in the house of mourning than in the house of feasting," and again the portion which sayeth—"It is well for me that I have been afflicted, for before I was afflicted, I went astray."

The morning came, but brought no tidings of the lost son. After a solemn farewell, all the visitants, save Adam Bell and

his daughter, returned every one to their own house ; and the disconsolate father, with his servants, again renewed their search among the hills and surrounding villages.

Days, weeks, months, and years rolled on. Time had subdued the anguish of the parents into a holy calm ; but their lost first-born was not forgotten, although no trace of his fate had been discovered. The general belief was, that he had perished in the breaking up of the snow ; and the few in whose remembrance he still lived, merely spoke of his death as a "very extraordinary circumstance," remarking that "he was a wild, venturesome sort o' lad."

Christmas had succeeded Christmas, and Peter Elliot still kept it in commemoration of the birthday of him who was not. For the first few years after the loss of their son, sadness and silence characterized the party who sat down to dinner at Marchlaw, and still at Peter's right hand was placed the vacant chair. But as the younger branches of the family advanced in years, the remembrance of their brother became less poignant. Christmas was, with all around them, a day of rejoicing, and they began to make merry with their friends ; while their parents partook in their enjoyment with a smile, half of approval and half of sorrow.

Twelve years had passed away ; Christmas had again come. It was the counterpart of its fatal predecessor. The hills had not yet cast off their summer verdure ; the sun, although shorn of its heat, had lost none of his brightness or glory, and looked down upon the earth as though participating in its gladness ; and the clear blue sky was tranquil as the sea sleeping beneath the moon. Many visitors had again assembled at Marchlaw. The sons of Mr. Elliot, and the young men of the party, were assembled upon a level green near the house, amusing themselves with throwing the hammer and other Border games, while himself and the elder guests stood by as spectators, recounting the deeds of their youth. Johnson, the sheep-farmer, whom we have already mentioned, now a brawny and gigantic fellow of two-and-thirty, bore away in every game the palm from all competitors. More than once, as Peter beheld his sons defeated, he

felt the spirit of youth glowing in his veins, and, "Oh!" muttered he in bitterness, "had my Thomas been spared to me, he would hae thrown his heart's bluid after the hammer before he would hae been beat by e'er a Johnson in the country!"

While he thus soliloquized, and with difficulty restrained an impulse to compete with the victor himself, a dark, foreign-looking, strong-built seaman, unceremoniously approached, and, with his arms folded, cast a look of contempt upon the boasting conqueror. Every eye was turned with a scrutinizing glance upon the stranger. In height he could not exceed five feet nine, but his whole frame was the model of muscular strength; his features were open and manly, but deeply sunburnt and weather-beaten; his long glossy black hair, curled into ringlets by the breeze and the billow, fell thickly over his temples and forehead; and whiskers of a similar hue, more conspicuous for size than elegance, gave a character of fierceness to a countenance otherwise possessing a striking impress of manly beauty. Without asking permission, he stepped forward, lifted the hammer, and swinging it round his head, hurled it upwards of five yards beyond Johnson's most successful throw. "Well done!" shouted the astonished spectators. The heart of Peter Elliot warmed within him, and he was hurrying forward to grasp the stranger by the hand, when the words groaned in his throat, "It was just such a throw as my Thomas would have made!—my own lost Thomas!" The tears burst into his eyes, and without speaking, he turned back, and hurried towards the house, to conceal his emotion.

Successively at every game, the stranger had defeated all who ventured to oppose him; when a messenger announced that dinner waited their arrival. Some of the guests were already seated, others entering; and, as heretofore, placed beside Mrs. Elliot, was Elizabeth Bell, still in the noontide of her beauty; but sorrow had passed over her features, like a veil before the countenance of an angel. Johnson, crest-fallen and out of humour at his defeat, seated himself by her side. In early life he had regarded Thomas Elliot as a rival

for her affections; and, stimulated by the knowledge that Adam Bell would be able to bestow several thousands upon his daughter for a dowry, he yet prosecuted his attentions with unabated assiduity, in despite of the daughter's aversion and the coldness of her father. Peter had taken his place at the table; and still by his side, unoccupied and sacred, appeared the vacant chair, the chair of his first-born, whereon none had sat since his mysterious death or disappearance.

"Bairns," said he, "did nane o' ye ask the sailor to come up and tak' a bit o' dinner wi' us?"

"We were afraid it might lead to a quarrel with Mr. Johnson," whispered one of the sons.

"He is come without asking," replied the stranger, entering; "and the wind shall blow from a new point if I destroy the mirth or happiness of the company."

"Ye're a stranger, young man," said Peter, "or ye would ken this is no a meeting o' mirth-makers. But, I assure ye, ye are welcome, heartily welcome. Haste ye, lasses," he added to the servants; "some o' ye get a chair for the gentleman."

"Gentleman, indeed!" muttered Johnson between his teeth.

"Never mind about a chair, my hearties," said the seaman; "this will do!" And before Peter could speak to withhold him, he had thrown himself carelessly into the hallowed, the venerated, the twelve-years-unoccupied chair! The spirit of sacrilege uttering blasphemies from a pulpit could not have smitten a congregation of pious worshippers with deeper horror and consternation than did this filling of the vacant chair the inhabitants of Marchlaw.

"Excuse me, sir! excuse me, sir!" said Peter, the words trembling upon his tongue; "but ye cannot sit there!"

"O man, man!" cried Mrs. Elliot, "get out o' that! get out o' that!—take my chair! take ony chair i' the house!—but dinna, dinna sit there! It has never been sat in by mortal being since the death o' my dear bairn!—and to see it filled by another is a thing that I canna endure!"

"Sir! sir!" continued the father, "ye have done it through ignorance, and we excuse ye. But that was my Thomas's seat! Twelve years this very day—his birthday—he perished, Heaven kens how! He went out from our sight, like the cloud that passes over the hills—never—never to return. And oh, sir, spare a faither's feelings! for to see it filled wrings the blood from my heart!"

"Give me your hand, my worthy soul!" exclaimed the seaman; "I revere—nay, hang it! I would die for your feelings! But Tom Elliot was my friend, and I cast anchor in this chair by special commission. I know that a sudden broadside of joy is a bad thing; but, as I don't know how to preach a sermon before telling you, all I have to say is—that Tom an't dead."

"Not dead!" said Peter, grasping the hand of the stranger, and speaking with an eagerness that almost choked his utterance; "oh sir! sir! tell me how!—Did ye say living?—Is my ain Thomas living?"

"Not dead, do ye say?" cried Mrs. Elliot, hurrying towards him and grasping his other hand—"not dead! And shall I see my bairn again? Oh! may the blessing o' Heaven, and the blessing o' a broken-hearted mother, be upon the bearer o' the gracious tidings! But tell me—tell me! how is it possible? As ye would expect happiness here or hereafter, dinna, dinna deceive me!"

"Deceive you!" returned the stranger, grasping, with impassioned earnestness, their hands in his—"Never!—never! and all I can say is—Tom Elliot is alive and hearty."

"No, no!" said Elizabeth, rising from her seat, "he does not deceive us; there is that in his countenance which bespeaks a falsehood impossible." And she also endeavoured to move towards him, when Johnson threw his arm around her to withhold her.

"Hands off, you land-lubber!" exclaimed the seaman, springing towards them, "or, shiver me! I'll show daylight through your timbers in the turning of a handspike!" And clasping the lovely girl in his arms, "Betty! Betty, my

love!" he cried, "don't you know your own Tom? Father, mother, don't you know me? Have you really forgot your own son? If twelve years have made some change on his face, his heart is as sound as ever."

His father, his mother, and his brothers clung around him, weeping, smiling, and mingling a hundred questions together. He threw his arms around the neck of each, and, in answer to their inquiries, replied—"Well, well, there is time enough to answer questions, but not to-day—not to-day."

"No, my bairn," said his mother, "we'll ask you no questions—nobody shall ask you any; but how—how were you torn away from us, my love? And, O hinny! where—where hae ye been?"

"It is a long story, mother," said he, "and would take a week to tell it. But, howsoever, to make a long story short, you remember when the smugglers were pursued, and wished to conceal their brandy in our house, my father prevented them; they left muttering revenge—and they have been revenged. This day twelve years, I went out with the intention of meeting Elizabeth and her father, when I came upon a party of the gang concealed in Hell's Hole. In a moment half a dozen pistols were held to my breast, and, tying my hands to my sides, they dragged me into the cavern. Here I had not long been their prisoner, when the snow, rolling down the mountains, almost totally blocked up its mouth. On the second night, they cut through the snow, and, hurrying me along with them, I was bound to a horse between two, and before daylight found myself stowed, like a piece of old junk, in the hold of a smuggling lugger. Within a week I was shipped on board a Dutch man-of-war, and for six years was kept dodging about on different stations, till our old yawing hulk received orders to join the fleet which was to fight against the gallant Duncan at Camperdown. To think of fighting against my own countrymen, my own flesh and blood, was worse than to be cut to pieces by a cat-o'-nine-tails; and, under cover of the smoke of the first broadside, I sprang upon the gunwale, plunged

into the sea, and swam for the English fleet. Never, never shall I forget the moment that my feet first trod upon the deck of a British frigate! My nerves felt as firm as her oak, and my heart free as the pennant that waved defiance from her masthead. I was as active as any one during the battle; and, when it was over, and I found myself again among my own countrymen, and all speaking my own language, I fancied—nay, hang it! I almost believed—I should meet my father, my mother, or my dear Bess, on board of the British frigate. I expected to see you all again in a few weeks at farthest; but, instead of returning to Old England, before I was aware, I found it was helm about with us. As to writing, I never had an opportunity but once. We were anchored before a French fort; a packet was lying alongside ready to sail; I had half a side written, and was scratching my head to think how I should come over writing about you, Bess, my love, when, as bad luck would have it, our lieutenant comes to me, and says he, ‘Elliot,’ says he, ‘I know you like a little smart service; come, my lad, take the head oar, while we board some of those French bumboats under the batteries!’ I couldn’t say no. We pulled ashore, made a bonfire of one of their craft, and were setting fire to second, when a deadly shower of small shot from the garrison scuttled our boat, killed our commanding officer, with half of the crew, and the few who were left of us were made prisoners. It is of no use bothering you by telling how we escaped from a French prison. We did escape; and Tom will once more fill his vacant chair.”

Should any of our readers wish farther acquaintance with our friends, all we say is, the new year was still young when Adam Bell bestowed his daughter’s hand upon the heir of Marchlaw, and Peter beheld the once vacant chair again occupied, and a namesake of the third generation prattling on his knee.

WILLIE WASTLE'S ACCOUNT OF HIS WIFE.

—o—

“Sic a wife as Willie had !
I wadna gie a button for her.”

BURNS.*

—o—

‘T WAS a very cruel dune thing in my neebor, Robert Burns, to mak a sang about my wife and me,’ said Mr. William Wastle, as he sat with a friend over a jug of reeking toddy, in a tavern near the bridge-end, in Dumfries, where he had been attending the cattle-market; ‘I dinna think it was neebor-like,’ he added; ‘indeed it was a rank libel upon baith her and me; and I took it the worse, inasmuch as I always had a very high respect for Maister Burns. Though he said that I “dwalt on Tweed,” and that I “was a wabster,” yet everybody kenned wha the song was aimed at.

* Mr. Allan Cunningham, in his “Life of Burns,” states the following particulars respecting Willie’s wife:—viz., that “He was a farmer, who lived near Burns, at Ellisland. She was a very singular woman; tea, she said, would be the ruin of the nation; sugar was a sore evil; wheaten bread was only fit for babes; earthenware was a pickpocket; wooden floors were but fit for threshing upon; slated roofs, cold; feathers good enough for fowls. In short, she abhorred change, and whenever anything new appeared—such as harrows with iron teeth—‘Ay! ay!’ she would exclaim, ‘ye’ll see the upshot!’ Of all modern things she disliked china most; she called it ‘burnt clay,’ and said ‘it was only fit for haudin’ the broo o’ stinkin’ weeds,’ as she called tea. On one occasion an English dealer in cups and saucers asked so much for his wares, that he exasperated a peasant, who said, ‘I canna purchase, but I ken ane that will. Gang there,’ said he, pointing to the house of Willie’s wife, ‘dinna be blate, or burd-moothed; ask a guid penny—she has the siller!’ Away went the poor dealer, spread out his wares before her, and summed up all by asking a double price. A blow from her crummock was his instant reward, which not only fell upon his person, but damaged his china. ‘I’ll learn ye,’ quoth she, as she heard the saucers jingle, ‘to come wi’ yer brazent English face, and yer bits o’ burnt clay to me!’ She was an unlovely dame—her daughters, however, were beautiful.”

Neither did my wife merit the description that has been drawn o' her; for, though she was nae beauty, and hadna a face like a wax-doll, yet there were thousands o' waur looking women to be met wi' than my Kirsty; and to say that her mither was a "tinkler" was very unjustifiable, for her parents were as decent and respectable people, in their sphere o' life, as ye would hae found in a' Nithsdale. Her faither had a small farm which joined on with one that I took a lease o' when I was about one-and-twenty. Kirsty was about three years aulder, and though not a bonny woman, she was in many respects, as ye shall hear in the course o' my story, a very extraordinary one. I was in the habit o' seeing her every day, and as I sometimes was working in a field next to her, I had every opportunity o' observing her industry, and that, frae mornin' till nicht, she was aye aydent. This gave me a far higher opinion o' her than if I had seen her gaun about wi' a buskit head; and often, at meal-times, I used to stand and speak to her owre the dyke. But, after we had been acquainted in this manner for some months, when the cheerfu' summer weather came in, and the grass by the dyke-sides was warm and green, and the bonny gowans blossomed amang it, I louped owre the dyke, and we sat down and took our dinners together. I couldna have believed it possible that a bit bare bannock and a drap skim milk wad gang down sae deliciously, but never before had I partaken o' onything that was sae pleasant to the palate. One day I was quite surprised when I found that my arm had slipped unconsciously round her waist, and drawing her closer to my side, I sighed, and said, 'O Kirsty, woman!'

She pulled away my hand from her waist, and looking me in the face, said—'Weel, Willie, man, what is't?'

'Kirsty,' said I, 'I like ye.'

'I thocht as meikle,' quoth she, 'but could ye no hae said sae at ance.'

'Perhaps I could, dear,' said I; 'but you ken true love is aye blate; however, if ye hae nae objections, I'll gang yont, after fothering-time the nicht, and speak to yer faither and

mither, and if they hae nae objections, and ye have yer providin' ready, wi' yer guid-will and consent I shall gie up oor names, and we shall be cried on Sabbath first.'

'Oh,' said she, 'I haena lived for five-and-twenty years without expectin' to get a guidman some day; and I hae had my providin' ready since I was eighteen, an' a' o' my ain spinnin' an' bleachin', an' the lint bocht wi' what I had wrocht for; so that I am behanden to naebody. My faither and mither have mair sense than to cast ony obstacle in the way o' my weelfare; and as ye are far frae bein' disagreeable to me, if we are to be married, it may as weel be sune as syne, and we may be cried on Sunday if you think proper.'

'O Kirsty, woman!' cried I, and I drew my arm round her waist again, 'ye hae made me as happy as a prince! I hardly ken what end o' me is upmost!'

'Nay, Willie, there is nae necessity for ony nonsensical raptures; ye ken perfectly weel that yer head is upmost, though I hae heard my faither talk about some idiots he ca's philosophers, who say that the world whirls roond aboot like a cart-wheel on an axletree, and that ance in every twenty-four hours our feet are upmost, and our head downmost; but it will be lang or onybody get me to believe in sic balderdash! As to yer being happy at present, it shall be nae faut o' mine if ye are not aye sae; and if ye aye be as I would wish ye to be, ye will never be unhappy.'

Such, as near as I can recollect, is not only the history but the exact words o' oor courtship. Her faither and mither gied their consent without the slightest hesitation. I remember her faither's words to me were—'Weel, William, frae a' that I hae seen o' ye, ye appear to be a very steady and industrious young man, and ane that is likely to do weel in the world. I hae seen also wi' great satisfaction that ye are very regular in your attendance upon the ordinances; there hasna been a Sabbath since ye cam to be oor neebor, that I hae missed ye oot o' yer seat in the kirk. Frae a' that I hae heard concernin' ye also, ye hae always been a serious, sober, and weel-behaved young man. These things are a great satisfaction to a faither when he finds them in the lad

that his dochter wishes to marry. Ye hae my consent to tak Kirsty; and, though I say it, I believe ye will find her to mak as industrious, carefu', and kind a wife as ye would hae found if ye had sought through a' broad Scotland for ane. I will say it, however, and before her face, that there are some things in which she takes it o' her mither, and in which she will hae her ain way. But this is her only faut. I'm sure ye'll ne'er hae cause to complain o' her wasting a bawbee, or o' her allooing even the heel o' a kebbuck to gang to unuse. It is needless for me to say mair; but ye hae my free and full consent to marry when ye like.'

Then up spoke the auld guidwife, and said—'Weel, Willie, lad, if you and Kirsty hae made up yer minds to mak a bargain o' it, I am as little disposed to oppose yer inclinations as her faither is. A guid wife I sincerely believe ye will find her prove to ye; and though her faither says that in some things she will be like me and have her ain way, let me tell ye, lad, that is owre often necessary for a woman to do, wha is striving everything in her power for the guid o' her husband and the family, and sees him, just through foolishness as it were, striving against her. Ye are strange beings you men folk to deal wi'. But ye winna find her a bare bride, for she has a kist fu' o' linen o' her ain spinnin', that may serve ye a' yer days, and even when ye are dead, though ye should live for sixty years.'

I thought it rather untimely that the auld woman should hae spoken about linen for our grave-claes before we were married; and I suppose my countenance had hinted as much, for Kirsty seemed to hae observed it, and she said—'My mother says what is and ought to be. It is aye best to be provided for whatever may come; and as Death often gives nae warning, I wadna like to be met wi' it, and to hae naething in the house to lay me out in like a Christian.'

I thought there was a vast deal o' sense and discretion in what she said, and though I didna like the idea o' such a premature providing o' winding-sheets, yet after she spoke I highly approved o' her prudence and forethought.

It was on a Monday forenoon, about three weeks after the

time I have been speaking o', that Kirsty, wi' ber faither and mother, and another young lass and acquaintance o' hers, that was to be best maid, cam yont to my house for ber and me to be married. I had sent for ane o' my brothers to be best man, and he was with me waiting when they came. She was not in the least discomposed, but behaved very modestly. In a few minutes the minister arrived, when the ceremony immediately began, and within a quarter of an hour she was mine, and I was hers, for the term o' our natural lives.

From the time that I took the farm, I had had no kind o' dishes in the house, save a wooden bowie or twa, four trenchers, three piggins, and twa bits o' tin cans, that I had bought from a travelling tinker for twopence apiece, and which Kirsty afterwards told me were each a halfpenny apiece aboon their value. I didna think that I had tasted tea about a dozen times in the whole course o' my life; but as it was coming into general use, I thought it would look respectfu' to my bride before ber faither and mother if I should hae tea upon our marriage day, and I could ask the minister to stop and tak a dish wi' us. I thought it would gie a character o' respectability to oor wedding. Therefore, on the day afore the marriage, I went into Dumfries and bought half a dozen o' bonny blue cups and saucers. I never durst tell Kirsty how meikle I gied for them. It was with great difficulty that I got them carried hame without breaking. I also bought two ounces o' the best tea, and a whole pound o' brown sugar.

I had a servant lassie at the time, the dochter o' a bind in the neighbourhood; she was necessary to me to do the work about the house, and to milk twa kye that I kept to mak the cheese, and a part o' the day to help the workers out wi' the bondage.

'Lassie,' said I, when I got hame, 'do ye ken boo to mak tea?'

'I'm no very sure,' said she; 'but I think I do. I ance got a cup, when I wasna weel, frae the farmer's wife that my faither lives wi'. I'll try.'

'Here, then,' says I, 'tak care o' thir, and see that ye dinna

break them, or it will mak a breaking that ye wouldna like in your quarter's wages.' So I gied her the cups and saucers to put awa carefully into the press.

'O maister,' says she, 'but noo, when I recollect, ye'll need a tea-kettle, and a teapat, and a cream-pat, and tea-spoons.'

'Preserve me!' quoth I, 'the lassie is surely wrang in the head! Hoo many articles o' *tea* and *cream* hae ye there?

'The parritch-kettle will do as weel as a tea-kettle—where can be the difference? Your teapats I ken naething aboot; and as for a cream-pat, set down the cream-bowie; and as for spoons, ye fool, they dinna sip tea—they drink it—just sirple it, as it were, out o' the saucer.'

'O, sir,' said she; 'but they need a little spoon to stir it round to mak the sugar melt—and that is weel minded, ye'll also require a sugar basin.'

'Hoots! toots! lassie,' cried I, 'do ye intend to ruin me? By yer account o' the matter, it would be almost as expensive to set up a tea equipage as a chariot equipage. No, no; just do as the miller's wife o' Newmills did.'

'And what way nicht that be, sir?' inquired she.

'Why,' said I, 'she took such as she had, and she never wanted! Just ye tak such as ye have—cogie, bowie, or tinneniken, never ye mind—show ye your dexterity.'

'Very weel, sir,' said she; 'I'll do the best I can.'

But, just to exemplify another trait in my wife's character, I will tell ye the upshot o' my cups and saucers. I confess that I was in a state o' very considerable perturbation; not only on account o' what the lassie had told me about the want o' a tea-kettle, teapat, and so forth, but also that, including the minister, there were seven o' us, while I had but six cups, and I consoled myself by thinking that, as Kirsty and I were now *one*, she might drink oot o' the cup, and I would tak the saucer, so that a cup and saucer would serve us baith, and I was trusting to the ingenuity o' the lassie to find substitutes for the other deficiencies, when she came ben to where we were sitting, and, going forward to Kirsty, says

she: 'Mistress, I have had the twa ounces o' tea on boiling in a chappin o' water for the last twa hoors—do ye think it will be what is *masked* noo?'

'Tea!' said my new-made wife, wi' a look o' astonishment, 'is the lassie talking about *tea*! While I am to be in this house—and I suppose that it is to be for my life—there shall nae poisonous foreign weed be used in it, nor come within the door, unless it be some drug that a doctor orders. Take it off the fire, and throw the broo awa. My certes! if young folk like us were to begin wi' sic extravagance, where would be the upshot? Na, na, Willie,' said she, turning round to me, 'let us begin precisely as we mean to end. At all events, let us rather begin meanly than end beggarly. I hae seen some folk, no aboon oor condition in life, mak a great dash on their wedding-day; and some o' them even hire gigs and coaches, forsooth, to tak a jaunt awa for a dozen o' miles! Poor things! it was the first and last time that ony o' them was either in gig or coach. But there shall be nae extravagance o' that kind for me. My faither and mother care naething about tea, for they hae never been used to it, and I'm sure that our friends here care as little; and, asking the minister's pardon, I am perfectly sure and certain that tea can be nae treat to him, for he has it every day, and it will be standing ready for him when he gangs hame. The supper will be ready by eight o'clock, and those who wish it may tak a glass o' speerits in the meantime—as it isna every day that they are at my wedding.'

Her faither and mother looked remarkably proud and weel pleased like at what she said, just as if they wished to say to me—'There's a wife for ye!' But I thought the minister seemed a good deal surprised, and in a few minutes he took up his hat, wished us much joy, and went away. For my part, I didna think sae much about my bride's lecture, as I rejoiced that she thereby released me from the confusion I should have experienced in exposing the poverty o' my tea equipage.

It was on the very morning after oor marriage, and just as I was gaun out to my wark—'Willie,' says she, 'I think we

should single the turnips in the field west o' the house the day. The cotters' twa bondage lasses and me will be able to manage it by the morn's nicht.'

'O my dear,' quoth I, 'but I hae nae intention that ye should gang out into the fields to work, noo that ye are my wife. Let the servant lass gang out, and ye can look after the meat.'

'Her! the idle taupie!' said she, 'we hae nae mair need for her than a cart has for a third wheel. Mony a time it has grieved me to observe her motions, when ye were out o' the way—and there would she and the other twa wenches been standing, clashing for an hour at a time, and no working a stroke. I often had it in my mind to tell ye, but only I thought ye might think it forward in me, as I perceived ye had a kindness for her. But I can baith do all that is to do in-doors, and work out-by also, and at the end o' the quarter she shall leave.'

'Wi' a' my heart,' says I, 'if ye wish it;' for it struck me she might be a wee thocht jealous o' the lassie; 'but there is no the sma'est necessity for you working out in the fields; for though she leaves, we can get a callant at threepence a day, that would just do as meikle out-work as she does, and ye would hae naething to attend to but the affairs o' the house.'

'O William!' replied she, 'I'm surprised to hear ye speak. Ye talk o' threepence a day just as if it were naething. Hoo many starving families are there, that threepence a day would mak happy! It is my maxim never to spend a penny unless it be laid out to the greatest possible advantage. Ye should always keep that in view, every time ye put your hand in your pocket. He that saves a penny has as many thanks, in the lang run, as he that gies it awa. Threepence a day, not including the Sabbath, is eighteen-pence a week; noo, you are a scholar, only think how much that comes to in a twelvemonth. There are fifty-twa weeks in the year—that is fifty-twa shillings; and fifty-twa six-pences, is—how much?'

'Twenty-six shillings, my dear,' said I, for I was quite

amused at her calculation—the thing had never struck me before.

‘Weel,’ added she, ‘fifty-two shillings and twenty-six shillings, put that together and see how much it comes to.’

‘Oh,’ says I, after half a minute’s calculation, ‘it will just be three pounds eighteen shillings, to a farthing.’

‘Noo,’ cried she, ‘only think o’ that!—three pounds eighteen shillings a year; and ye would throw it away, just as if it were three puffs o’ breath! Now, William, just listen to me an’ tak tent:—that is within twa shillings o’ four pounds. It would far mair than cleed you and me, out and out, and head to foot, from year’s end to year’s end. But at present the wench’s meat and wages come to three times that, and therefore I am resolved, William, that while I am able to work, we shall neither throw away the one nor the other. It is best that we should understand each other in time; therefore, I just tell ye plainly, as I said yesterday, that as I wish to end I mean to begin. This very day, this very morning and hour, I go out wi’ the bondage lassies to single the turnips; and at the end o’ the quarter, the lazy taupie butt-a-house maun walk about her business.’

‘Weel, Kirsty, my darling,’ says I, ‘your way be it. Only I maun again say, that I had no wish or inclination whatever to see ye toiling and thinning turnips beneath a burning sun, or maybe taking them up and shawing them, when the cauld drift was cutting owre the face keener than a razor.’

‘Weel, William,’ quoth she, ‘it is needless saying any more words about it—it is my fixed and determined resolution.’

‘Then hinny,’ says I, ‘if ye be absolutely resolved upon that, it is o’ no manner o’ use to say ony mair upon the subject, of course—your way be it.’

So the servant lassie was discharged accordingly, and Kirsty did everything hersel’. Wet day and dry day, whatever kind o’ wark was to be done, there was she in the middle o’ it, by her example spurring on the bondagers. Even when we began to hae a family, I hae seen her

working in the fields wi' an infant on her back; and I am certain that for a dozen o' harvests, while she was aye at the head o' the shearers, there was aye our bairn, that was youngest at the time, lying rowed up in a blanket at the foot o' the rig, and playing wi' the stubble to amuse itself'.

There was many that said that I was entirely under her thumb, and that she had the maistership owre me. But that was a grand mistake, for she by no means exercised onything like maistership owre me; though I am free to confess, that I at all times paid a great degree o' deference to her opinions, and that she had a very particular and powerful way o' enforcing them. Yet, although I was in no way cowed by her, there wasna a bairn that we had, frae the auldest to the youngest, that durst play *cheep* before her. She certainly had her family under great subjection, and their bringing up did her great credit. They were allowed time to play like ither bairns—but from the time that they were able to make use o' their hands, ye would hae hardly found it possible to come in upon us and seen ane o' them idle. All were busy wi' something; and no ane o' them durst hae stepped owre a pin lying on the floor, without stooping down to tak it up, or passed onything out o' its place without putting it right. For I will say for her again, that if my Kirsty wasna a bonny wife, she was not only a thrifty but a tidy ane, and keepit every ane and everything tidy around her.

She was a strange woman for abhorring everything that was new-fangled. She was a most devout believer in, and worshipper o' the wisdom o' our ancestors. She perfectly hated everything like change; and as to onything that implied speculation, ye micht as weel hae spoken o' profanation in her presence. She said she liked auld friends, auld customs and fashions; and was the sworn enemy o' a' the innovations on the practices and habits that had been handed down frae generation to generation. I dinna ken if ever she heard the names Whig or Tory in her life; but if Tory mean an enemy o' change, then my Kirsty certainly was a Tory o' the very purest water.

I dinna suppose that she believed there was such a word

as *improvement* in the whole Dictionary. She would hae allooted everything to stand steadfast as Lot's wife, for ever and for ever. But, however, just to gie ye a specimen or twa o' her remarkable disposition:—I think it was about sixteen years after we were married that I took a tack o' an adjoining farm which was much larger than the ane we occupied. I was conscious it would require every penny we had scraped thegither, and that we had saved, to stock it. My wife was by no means favourable to my taking it. She said we kenned what we had done, but we didna ken what we might do; and it was better to go on as we were doing, than to risk oor a'. I acknowledged that there was a vast deal o' truth in what she said; but, however, I saw that the farm was an excellent bargain, and I was resolved to tak it, say what she might; and, therefore, though she was said to domineer over me, yet, just to prove to every person round about that I was not under a wife's government, I did tak it. I had not had it twa years when I began to find that thrashing wi' the flail would never answer. Often, when the markets were on the rise, and when I could hae turned owre many pounds into my ain pocket, I found it was a' thegither impossible for me to get my corn thrashed in time to catch the markets while they were high; and I am certain that, in the second year that I had the new farm, I lost at least a hundred pounds frae that cause alone—that is, I didna get a hundred pounds that I micht hae got, and that was much the same as losing it oot o' my pocket. Thrashing machines at that period were just beginning to come into vogue, but there was a terrible outcry against them; and mony a ane said that they were an invention o' the Prince o' Darkness; for my part, I wish he would never do mair ill upon the earth than invent such things as thrashing machines. Hooever, I saw plain and clearly the advantage that the machine had owre the flail, and I was determined to hae ane. But never did I see a woman in such a steer as the mention o' the thing put Kirsty in. She went perfectly wild about it.

'What, William!' she cried, 'what do ye talk about?'

Losh me, man, have ye nae mair sense?—have ye nae discretion whatever? Will ye really rush upon ruin at a horse-race? Ye talk aboot getting a machine! How, I ask ye, how do ye expect that ever ye could prosper for a single day after, if ye were to throw oor twa decent barn-men oot o' employment, and their families oot o' bread? I just ask ye that question, William. Doesna the proverb say—'Live and let live;' and hoo are men to live, if by an invention o' the Enemy o' mankind, ye tak work oot o' their hands and bread oot o' their mouths?'

'Dear me, Kirsty,' said I, 'hoo is it possible that a woman o' your excellent sense can talk such nonsense? Ye see very weel that, if I had had a machine, I micht hae made a hundred pounds mair than I did by last year's crops—that, certainly, would have been a good turn to us; and, tak my word for it, it is neither in the power nor in the nature o' the Evil One to do a guid turn to onybody.'

'Willie,' quoth she, 'ye talk like a silly man—like a very silly man, indeed. If the enemy o' mankind hadna it in his power to do for us what we tak to be for oor guid, hoo in the warld do ye think he could tempt us to our hurt? I say that thrashing-machines are an invention o' his, and that they are ane o' the instruments he is bringing up for the ruin o' this country. It is him, and him alone, that is putting it into your head to buy ane o' his infernal devices, in order that he may not only ruin you, baith soul and body, by filling ye wi' a desire o' riches, an' making ye the oppressor and the robber o' the poor, but that, through your oppression and robbery, he may ruin them also, and bring them to shame or the gallows?'

'Forgie me, Kirsty,' said I, 'what in a' the world do ye mean? Hoo is it possible that ye can talk aboot me as likely to be either an oppressor or a robber o' the poor? I'll declare that there was never a beggar passed either me or my door, that ever I saw, but I gied him something. I'm sure, guid-wife, ye baith ken better o' me, and think better o' me, than to talk sae.'

'Yes, William,' said she, 'I did think better o' ye; but I

noo see distinctly that the enemy is leading ye blindfolded to your ruin. First, through the pride o' yer heart, he tempted ye to tak this big farm, that, as ye thocht, ye might hasten to be rich; and now he is seducing ye to buy ane o' his diabolical machines for the same end, and in order that ye may not only deprive honest men and their families o' bread, but, belike, rather than starve, tempt them to steal! And what ca' ye that but oppressing and robbing the poor? Hooever, buy a machine!—buy ane, and ye'll see what will be the upshot? If ye dinna repent it, say I'm no your wife.'

I confess her words were onything but agreeable to me, and they rather set me a hesitating hoo to act. Hooever, my mind was bent upon buying the machine. I had said to several o' my neebors that I intended to hae ane put up; and I was convinced that, if I drew back o' my word, it would be said that my wife wouldna let me get it, and I would be made a general laughing-stock—and that was a thing that I held in greater dread than even my wife's lectures, severe as they sometimes were; therefore, reason or nane, I got a machine put up. It caused a very general outcry amongst a' the 'datal' men and their wives for miles around. At ae time I even thocht that they would mob me and pull it to pieces. But all their clamour was a mere snaw-flake falling in the sea, compared wi' the perpetual dirdum that Kirsty rang in my ears aboot it. She actually threatened that judgments would follow, and I dinna ken a' what. But on the morning o' the day that I yoked the horses into it, and began to thrash wi' it for the first time, I declare to you that she took the six bairns wi' her, and absolutely went to her faither's, vowing to work for them until the blood sprang from her finger-ends, rather than live wi' a man that would be guilty o' such madness and iniquity.

But having heard before dinner-time that I had had to employ a woman at sixpence a day to feed into the machine she came back as fast as her feet could carry her, wi' a' the bairns behint her, and ordering the stranger away, began to feed the machine hersel'. and the bairns carried her the sheaves.

I saw that out o' a spirit o' pure wickedness she was distressing herself far beyond what there was the smallest occasion for. It was as clear as day that indignation was working in her heart, like barm fermenting in a bottle, and just about half an hour before we were to leave off thrashing for the night, she was seized with a very alarming pain in her breast. I saw and said it was a hysterical affection, and was altogether the consequence o' the passion that she had given way to on account o' the unlucky machine. She, however, denied that there were such diseases in existence as either hysterical or nervous affections. They were sham disorders, she said, that cam into the country wi' tea and spirit-drinking; and she assuredly was free from indulging in either the ane or the other. But she grew worse and worse, and was at last obliged to sit down upon some straw on the barn floor. I ventured forward to her and said—'Kirsty, woman, ye had better gang awa into the house. Ye will do yersel' mair ill by sitting there, for there is a current o' air through the loft, which, after you being warm with working, may gie ye your death o' cauld. Rise up, dear, and gang awa into the house and try if a glass o' usquebae will do ye ony guid.'

Maister Burns, the poet, has said—

'She has an ee, she has but *ane*;

but, certes, had he seen the look that she gied me as I then spoke to her, he would hae been satisfied that she had *twa*! I saw it was o' nae manner o' use for me either to offer advice, or express sympathy. The wife o' an auld man that was called John Neilson, and who for several years had been our barn-man, came into the machine loft at the time, and wi' a great deal o' concern she asked my wife what was like the matter wi' her. Now this auld Peggy Neilson had the reputation, for miles round, o' being an extraordinary skilly woman. There wasna a bairn in the parish took a sair throat, or got a burned foot, or a cut finger, or took a *drum* for a day or twa, but its mother said—'I maun hae

Peggy Neilson spoken to about that bairn, before it be ovra late.' Kirsty, therefore, told her hoo she was affected, when the other, wi' the confidence o' doctor o' medicine brought up at the first college in the kingdom, said—'Then, ma'am, if that be the way ye feel, there is naething in the warld sae grid for ye as a blast o' the pipe. I aye carry a tinder box, a flint and steel wi' me, and ye are welcome to a whuff o' my cutty.'

Now, Kirsty was a bitter enemy to baith smoking and snuffing in general; but she had great faith in the skill o' Peggy Neilson, and wad far rather hae done whatever she advised, than followed the prescription o' the best doctor in a' the land. She took the auld woman's pipe, therefore, and began to blaw through a spirit o' pain and perverseness at the same moment. As I anticipated, it soon made her dizzy in the head, and she had to be led into the house. Hooever, in a short time the pain that she had been suffering, was greatly abated, though whether the smoking contributed towards removing it or not, I dinna pretend to say. Just as she had been ta'en to the house, we were done thrashing for the day, and I was very highly gratified wi' the day's wark.

But I was very tired, and as soon as I had had my sowens I went to bed. I several times thought, and remarked it, that there was a sort o' burnt smell about.

'Ay,' said Kirsty, who by this time was a great deal better, 'they who will use the engines o' forbidden agents maun expect to smell them, as in the end they will feel them.'

Being conscious it was o' nae use to reason wi' her, for she in general had the better o' me in an argument, I tried to compose myself to sleep. But it was in vain to think o' closing my een, for the smell o' burning grew stronger and stronger, and I was rising again, saying—'There is something burning aboot somewhere, and I canna rest until I hae seen what it is.'

'Nor letither folk rest either,' said Kirsty.

Just at that moment, oor eldest dochter, who was as per-

fect a picture o' beauty as ever man looked upon wi' eyes o' admiration, and who, being alarmed by the smell as well as me, had gane oot to examine from what it proceeded, came running oot o' breath, crying—'Faither! faither!—the barn and everything is on fire!'

'O goodness!' cried I, as I threw on part o' my claes in the twinkling o' an ee; 'what wretch can hae been sae wicked as to do it?'

'It's a judgment upon ye,' said Kirsty, 'for having such a thing about the place, after a' the admonitions ye had against it. I said ye would see what would be the upshot, and it hasna been lang o' coming.'

'O ye tormentor o' my life!' cried I, as I ran oot o' the house; 'it's your handy-work!'

'Mine!' exclaimed she. 'O ye heartless man that ye are, how dare ye presume either to say or think sic a thing!' and followed me out.

The whole stackyard was black wi' smoke—it was hardly possible to breathe—and a great sheet o' fire, like the mouth o' a fiery dragon, was rushing and roaring out at the barn-door. I didna ken what to do; I was ready to rush head foremost into the middle o' the flames, as if that I could hae crushed them out wi' the weight o' my body; and I am persuaded that I would hae darted right into the machine loft, where the flames were bursting through the very tiles, as frae the mouth o' a volcano, had not my wife, and our eldest daughter Janet, flown after me, and held me in their arms, the one crying—'Be calm, William—do naething rashly—let us see to save what can be saved;' and the other saying—'Faither! faither! dinna risk your life.'

Now, there was a hard frost owrie the entire face o' the ground, and there wasna a drop o' water to be got within a quarter o' a mile; and the whole o' my year's crop, with the exception o' what had that day been thrashed, was in the stackyard. I shouted at the pitch o' my voice for assistance, but the devouring flame ssoon roared louder than I did. Kirsty, wi' her usual presence o' mind, began to clear away the straw from around the barn to prevent the fire from spreading,

and she called upon the bairns and me to follow her example. She also ordered a laddie to set the horses out o' the stables, and the nowt oot o' the courtine,' and drive them into a field where they would be oot o' danger. A' our neighbours round about in a short time arrived to our assistance; but a' our combined efforts were unavailing. The wood wark o' the machines was already on fire—the barn roof fell in, and up flew such a volley o' smoke and firmament o' fire as man had never witnessed. The sparks ascended in millions upon millions; and as they poured down again like a shower o' fire, every stack that I had broke into a blaze, and the whole produce o' my farm, corn, straw, and hay, became as a burning fiery furnace. It became impossible for ony living thing to remain in the stackyard. From end to end, and round and round, it was one fierce and awful flame. The heat was scorching, and the dense smoke was baith blinding and suffocating. Every person was obliged to flee from it. The very cattle in the field ran about in confusion, and moaned wi' terror, and the horses neighed wi' fright, and pranced to and fro. I stood at a distance, as motionless as a dead man, gazing wi' horror upon the terrific scene o' desolation, beholding the destruction o' my property—the burning up, as I may say, o' a' my prospects. The teeth in my head chattered thegither, and every joint in my body seemed oot o' its socket; and the raging o' destruction in the stackyard was naething to the raging o' misery in my breast; and especially because I couldna banish from my brain the awfu' thought that the hand o' the wife o' my bosom had lighted the conflagration. While I was standing in this state o' speechless agony, and some round about me were pitying me, while others said, 'He had nae business to get a thrashing machine, and the thing wouldna hae happened,' Kirsty came forward to me, and takin' me by the hand, said, 'William, dinna be silly—appear like a man before folk. Our loss is nae doubt great, but in time we may get owre it; and be thankfu' that it is nae waur than it is like to be—for your wife and bairns are spared to ye, and we have escaped unscaithed.'

'Awa, ye descendant o' Judas Iscariot!' cried I; 'dinna speak to me!'

'William,' said she, calmly, 'what infatuation possesses ye, man?—dinna mak a fool o' yoursel.'

'Awa wi' ye!' cried I, perfectly shaking wi' rage.

'Dear me!' I heard a neighbour remark to another; 'how gruffly he speaks to Kirsty! I aye thought that she had the upperhand o' him, but it doesna appear by his manner o' speaking to her.'

Distracted, wretched, and angry as I was, I experienced a sort o' secret pleasure at hearing the observâtion. I had shown them that I wasna a slave tied to my wife's apron-strings, as they supposed me to be. Kirsty left me wi' a look that had baith scorn and pity in it. But oor auldest lassie, my bonny fair-haired Janet, to look upon whose face I always delighted beyond everything on earth—came running forward to me, and throwing her arms about my neck, sobbed wi' her face upon my breast, and softly whispered, 'Dinna stand that way, faither, a' body is looking at ye; and dinna speak harshly to my poor mother—she is distressed enough without your being angry wi' her.' I bent my head upon my bairn's shouther, and the tears ran down my cheeks.

By this time everything was oot o' the house; and the fire was prevented frae reaching it, chiefly through the daring exertions o' a haffins laddie, whose name was James Patrick, who was the son o' a neebor farmer, and who, though not aboon seventeen years o' age, I observed was very fond o' oor bonny Janet; for I had often observed the young creatures wandering in the loaning thegither; and when ye mentioned the name o' the ane before the other, the blood rose to their face.

Next morning, the stackyard, barn, byres, and stables, presented a fearful picture o' devastation. There was naething to be seen but the still smoking heaps o' burnt straw and roofless buildings, wi' wreck and ruin to the richt hand and to the left. Some thought that the calamity would knock me aff my feet, and cause me to become a broken man—and I thought mysel' that that would be its effect. But Kirsty

was determined that we should never sink while we had a finger to wag to keep us aboon the water. Cheap as she had always maintained the house, she now keepit it at almost no expense whatever. For more than two years nothing was allowed to come into it but what the farm produced, and what we had within ourselves, neither in meat nor in claething.

But though I witnessed all her exertions, nothing could satisfy my mind that she was not the cause o' the destruction o' the machine, and through it all that was in and about the stackyard. The idea haunted me perpetually and rendered me miserable, and I could not look upon my wife without saying to mysel'—'Is it possible that she could hae been guilty o' such folly and great wickedness.' I was the more confirmed in my suspicion, because she never again mentioned the subject o' the machine in my hearing, neither would she allow it to be spoken about by ony ane else.

What gratified me maist during the years that we had to undergo privation, was the cheerfulness wi' which all the bairns submitted to it; and I couldna deny that it was owing to her excellent manner o' bringing them up. Our Janet, who was approaching what may be called womanhood, was now talked o' through the hale countryside for her beauty and sweet temper; and it pleased me to observe that, during our misfortune, the attentions o' James Patrick (through whose skilful exertions oor house was saved frae the conflagration) increased. It was admitted, on all hands, that a more winsome couple was never seen in Nithsdale.

Oor auldest son David, who was only fifteen months younger than his sister, had also grown to be o' great assistance to me. Before he was seventeen, he was capable o' man's work, which enabled me to do wi' a hind less than I formerly employed. My landlord also was very considerate; and the first year after the burning he gave me back half of the rent, which I, with considerable difficulty, had been able to scrape thegither. But when I went hame, and in the gladness o' my heart began to count down the money upon the table before Kirsty and the bairns, and to tell them how

good the laird had been—‘Tak it up, William!’ cried she, ‘tak it up, and gang back wi’ it—he would count it an obligation a’ the days o’ our lives. I will be beholden to neither laird nor lord! nor shall ony ane belonging to me—sae tak back the money, for it isna ours!’

‘Bless me,’ thought I, ‘but this is something very remarkable. This is certainly another proof that she really is at the bottom o’ the fire-raising. It is the consciousness o’ her guilt that makes her shudder at and refuse the kindness o’ the laird.’

‘It is braw talking, Kirsty,’ said I; ‘but I see nae necessity for persons that hae been visited wi’ a misfortune such as we met wi’, and wha hae suffered sae much on account o’ it, to let their pride do them an injury or exceed their discretion. Consider that we hae a rising family to provide for.’

‘Consider what ye like,’ quoth she, ‘but, if ye accept the siller, consider what will be the upshot. Ye would hae to be hat in hand to him at all times and on all occasions. Yer very bairns would be, as it were, his bought slaves. No, William, tak back the money—I order ye!’

‘Ye order me!’ cried I, ‘there’s a guid ane!—and where got ye authority to order me? If ye will hae the siller ta’en back, tak it back yersel’.

Without saying another word, she absolutely whipped it off the table, every plack and bawbee, into her apron; and, throwing on her rockelay and hood, set aff to the laird’s wi’ it, where, as I was afterwards given to understand, she threw it down upon his table wi’ as little ceremony as she had swept it aff mine.

Ye may weel imagine that baith my astonishment and vexation were very considerable. I had seen a good deal o’ Kirsty, but the act o’ taking back the siller crowned a’!

‘Losh!’ said I, in the pure bitterness o’ my spirit, ‘that caps a’!—that is even worse than destroying the machine, wi’ the stacks and stabling into the bargain!’

‘What do ye mean about destroying the machine, faither?’ inquired Janet and David, almost at the same instant—‘who do ye say destroyed it?’

'Naebody,' said I, angrily, 'naebody!'—for I found I had said what I ought not to have said.

'Really, faither,' said Janet, 'whatever it may be that ye think and hint at, I am certain that ye do my mother a great injustice if ye harbour a single thought to her prejudice. It may appear rather proud-spirited her takin' back the siller, though I hae nae dout, in the lang run, but we'll a' approve o' it.'

'That is exactly what I think too,' said David.

'Oh, nae dout!' said I, 'nae dout o' that!—for she has ye sae learned, that everything she does, or that ony o' ye does, is always right; and whatever I do must be wrang!' and I went out o' the house in a pet, driving the door behind me, and thinking about the machine and the loss o' the siller.

Hooever, I am happy to say, that although Kirsty did tak back the money to the laird and leave it wi' him, yet, as I have already hinted to ye, through her frugal management, within a few years we got the better o' the burning. But there is a saying, that some folk are no sooner weel than they are ill again—and I'm sure I may say that at that time I no sooner got the better o' ae calamity, until another overtook me. Ye hae heard what a terrible dir-dum the erecting o' toll-bars caused throughout the country, and upon the Borders in particular. Kirsty was one of those who cried oot most bitterly against them. She threatened that if it were attempted to place ane within ten miles o' oor farm, she would tear it to pieces with her ain hands.

'Here's a bonny time o' day, indeed!' said she, 'that a body canna gang for a cart load o' coals or peats, or tak their corn or whatever it may be, to the market, but they must pay whatever a set o' Justices o' the Peace please to charge them for the liberty o' driving alang the road. Na, na! the roads did for our faithers before us, and they will do for us. They went alang them free and without payment, and so will we; for I defy ony man to claim what has been a public road for ages, as his property. Only submit to such an imposition, and see what will be the upshot. But

rather than they shall mak sic things in this neighbourhood I will raise the whole countryside.'

Unfortunately in this, as in everything else, she verified her words. A toll-bar was erected within half a mile o' oor door. Kirsty was clean mad about it. She threatened not only to break the yett to pieces, but to hang the toll-keeper over the yett-post, if he offered resistance. I thought o' my machine, and said little; and the more especially because every ane, baith auld and young, and through the whole country, so far as I could hear, were o' the same sentiments as Kirsty. There never was onything proposed in this kingdom that was mair unpopular. And I am free to confess, that, with regard to the injustice o' toll-bars, I was precisely o' the same way o' thinking as my wife—only I by no means wished to carry things to the extremes that she wished to bring them to.

I ought to tell ye that our laird was more than suspected o' being the principal cause o' us having a toll-bar placed so near us, so that we could neither go to lime, coals, nor market, without gaun through it. I was, therefore, almost glad that my wife had taken back the siller to him, lest—as I was against raising a disturbance about the matter—folk should say, that my hands and tongue were tied wi' the siller which he had given me back; for, if I didna wish to be considered the slave o' my wife, as little did I desire to be thought the tool o' my landlord. But, ae day, I had been in at Dumfries in the month o' July, selling my wool; I had met wi' an excellent market, and a wool-buyer from Leeds and I got very hearty thegither. He had bought from me before; and, on that day, he bought all that I had. I knew him to be an excellent man, though a keen Yorkshireman, and, ye ken, that the Yorkshire folk and we Scotchmen are a gay tight match for ane anither—though I believe, after a', they rather beat us at keeping the grip o' the siller; but as I intended to say, I treated him, and he treated me, and a very agreeable day we had. I recollect, when he was pressing me to hae the other gill, I sang him a bit hamely sang o' my ain composing. Ye shall hear it:—

Nay, dinna press, I winna stay,
 For drink shall ne'er abuse me ;
 It's time to rise and gang away—
 Sae, neibors, ye'll excuse me.

It's true I like a social gill,
 A friendly crack wi' cronies ;
 But I like my wifie better still,
 Our Jennies and our Jonnies.
 There's something by my ain fireside—
 A saft, a haly sweetness ;
 I see, wi' mair than kingly pride,
 My hearth a heaven o' neatness.

Though whisky may gie care the fling,
 It's triumph's unco noisy ;
 A jiffy it may pleasure bring,
 But comfort it destroys aye.
 But I can view my ain fireside
 Wi' a' a faither's rapture—
 Wee Jenny's hand in mine will slide,
 While Davy reads his chapter.

I like your company an' your crack ;
 But there's ane I loo dearer,
 And wha will sit till I come back
 Wi' ne'er a ane to cheer her.
 A waff o' joy comes owre her face
 The moment that she hears me ;
 The supper—a' thing in its place,
 An' wi' her smile she cheers me.

However, I declare to you, it was very near ten o'clock before I left the house we are sitting in at present, and put my foot in the stirrup. But, as my friend Robin says—

‘Weel mounted on my grey mare Meg,’

I feared for naething ; and, though I had sixteen lang Scots miles to ride, I thought naething about it ; for, as he says again—

‘Kings may be great, but I was glorious,
 Owre a' the ills o' life victorious!’

But, just as I had reached within about half-a-mile o' the toll-bar that had been erected near my farm, I saw a sort o'

light rising frae the ground, and reflected on the sky. My heart sank within me in an instant. I remembered the last time I had seen such a light. I thought o' my burning stackyard, o' my ruined machine, and o' Kirsty! My first impulse was to gallop forward, but a thousand thoughts, a thousand fears, come owre me in an instant; and I thought that evil tidings came quick enough o' their ain accord, without galloping to meet them. As I approached the toll-bar, the flame and the reflection grew brighter and brighter; and I heard the sound o' human voices, in loud and discordant clamour. My forebodings told me, to use Kirsty's words, what would be the upshot. I hadna reached within a hundred yards o' the bar, when, aboon a' the shouting and the uproar, I heard her voice, the voice o' my ain wife, crying, 'Mak him promise that it shall ne'er be put up again—mak him swear to it—or let his yett gang the gaet o' the toll-yett!'

In a moment all that I had dreaded I found to be true. At the sound o' her voice, hounding on the enraged multitude (though I didna altogether disapprove o' what they were doing), I plunged my spurs into my horse, and galloped into the middle o' the outrageous crowd, crying, 'Kirsty! I say, Kirsty! awa hame wi' ye! What right or what authority had ye to be there?'

'Hear him! hear him!' cried the crowd. 'Willie has turned a toll-bar man, and a laird man, because the laird once offered him the half o' his rent back again! Never mind him, Kirsty—we'll stand yer friends!'

'I thank ye, neibours,' said she, 'but I require naebody to stand as friends between my guidman and me. I ken it is my duty to obey him, that is, when he is himself, and comes hame at a reasonable time o' nicht, but not when he is in a way that he doesna ken what he's saying, as he is the nicht.'

'Weel done, Mistress Wastle!' cried a dozen o' them, 'we see ye hae the whip-hand o' him yet!'

'The mischief tak ye!' cried I, 'for a wheen ill-mannered scoundrels; but I'll let every mother's son and dochter among ye ken whase hand the whip is in!'

And wi' that, I began to lay about me on every side ; but before I had brought the whip half a dozen o' times round my head, I found that the horse was out from under me ; and there was I, wi' my back upon the ground, while, on the one side, was a heavy foot upon my breast, and on the other Kirsty threatening ony ane that would injure a hair o' her husband's head ; and my son David and James Patrick rushing forward, seized the man by the throat that had his foot upon my breast, and, in an instant, they had him lying where I had lain ; for they were stout, powerfu' lads.

But when I got upon my feet, and began to recover from the surprise that I had met wi', there did I see the laird himsel', standing trembling like an ash-leaf in the middle o' the unruly mob—and, as ringleader o' the whole, my wife Kirsty shaking her hand in his face, and endeavouring to extort from him a promise that there never should be another toll-bar erected on his grounds, while he was laird.

'Kirsty !' I exclaimed, ' what are ye after ? Are ye mad ?'

'No, William !' cried she, ' I am not mad, but I am standing out for our rights against injustice ; and sorry am I to perceive that at a time when everybody is crying out, and raising their hand against the oppression that is attempted to be practised upon them, my guidman should be the only coward in the countryside.'

'William Wastle !' said the terrified laird, whom some o' them were handling very roughly (and principally, I must confess, at the instigation o' Kirsty), ' I'm glad to see that I have one tenant upon my estate who is a true man ; and I ask your protection.'

'Such protection as I can afford, sir,' said I, ' ye shall have ; but, after the rough handling which I have experienced this very moment, I dout it is not much that is in my power to afford ye.'

'Get your faither awa to his bed, bairns !' cried my wife, as I was driving my way through the crowd to the assistance o' the laird ; and I'll declare, if my son David, and James Patrick, didna actually come behind me, and lifting

me aff my feet, carried me shouther-high a' the way to my bedroom; and, in spite o' my threats, expostulations, and commands, locked me into it.

'Weel,' thought I, as I threw myself down upon the bed without takin aff my claes (partly because I found my head wanted ballast to tak them aff), I said unto mysel'—'This comes o' having a wise and headstrong wife, and bairns o' her way o' bringing up. But if ever I marry again and hae a family, I shall ken better how to act.'

Notwithstanding all that I had undergone and witnessed, in the space o' ten minutes I fell fast asleep; and the first thing that I awoke to recollect—that is to be conscious o'—was my daughter Janet rushing to my bedside, and crying—'Faither! faither! my mother is a prisoner!—my poor, dear mother, and James Patrick also!—and I heard the laird saying that they would baith be transported, as the very least that could happen them for last night's work, which I understand will be punished more severely than even highway robbery!'

I awoke like a man born to a consciousness o' horror, and o' naething but horror. All that I had seen and heard, and encountered on the night before, was just as a dream to me, but a dismal dream, I trow.

'Where is yer mother?' I gasped, 'or what is it that ye are saying, hinny? and—where is James Patrick?'

'Oh!' cried my darling daughter, 'before this time they are baith in Dumfries jail, for pulling down and burning the toll-yetts, and threatening the life o' the laird. But everybody says it will gang particularly hard against my mother and poor James; for, though every one was to blame, they were what they ca' ringleaders.'

I soon recollected enough o' the previous night's proceedings to comprehend what my daughter said. I hurried on my claes, and awa I flew to Dumfries. But I ought to tell ye, that the laird's servants had ridden in every direction for assistance; and having got three or four constables, and about a dozen o' the regular military, all armed wi' swords and pistols, they made poor Kirsty and James Patrick, wi'

about a dozen others, prisoners, and conveyed them to Dumfries jail.

When I was shown into the prison, Kirsty and James, and the whole o' them were together. 'O Kirsty, woman!' said I, in great distress, 'could ye no hae keepit at hame while my back was turned? Why hae ye brought the like o' this upon us? I'm sure ye kenned better! *Was the destruction o' the machine and the stackyard no a warning to ye?*'

'William,' answered she, 'what is it that ye mean?—is this a time to cast upon me yer low-minded suspicions? Had ye last night acted as a man, we might hae got the laird to comply wi' our request; but it is through you, and such as you, that everything in this unlucky country is gaun to destruction, and sorry am I to say that ill o' ye—for a kind, a good, and a faithfu' husband hae ye been to me, William.'

'O, sir!' said James Patrick, coming forward and taking me by the hand, 'may I just beg that ye will tak my respects to yer dochter Janet; and, I hope that whatever may be the issue o' this awkward affair, that she will in no way look down upon me, because I happen to be as a sort o' prisoner in a jail.' My heart rose to my mouth, and I hadna a word to say to either my wife or him.

'Weel,' said I, as I left them, 'I must do the best I can to bring baith o' ye aff; and, to accomplish it, the best lawyers in a' Scotland shall be employed.'

But to go on—at a very great expense, I, and the faither o' James Patrick, had employed the very principal advocates that went upon the Dumfries circuit; and they tauld us that we had naething to fear, and that we might keep ourselves quite at ease.

I was glad that my son David hadna been seized and imprisoned, as weel as his mother and James Patrick, for he also had been ane o' the ringleaders in the breaking doon and burning o' the toll-bars, and in the assault upon the laird. But he escaped apprehension at the time, and I suppose they thought that they had enough in custody to answer the ends o' justice and the law, and, therefore, he was permitted to remain unmolested.

Within six months after this, James Patrick and our dochter Janet were married; and an enviable couple they then were, and such they are unto this day. And, as for my Kirsty, auld though she is, and though the sang says—

‘I wadna gie a button for her,’—

auld, I say, as she is, and wi’a’ her faults, I would gie a’ the buttons upon my coat for her still, and a’ the siller that ever was in my pouch into the bargain.

THE END.

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